Government of
Saskatchewan

Annual Report

Saskatchewan Social Services

1998-1999

100-04590/

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SASKATCHEWAN SOCIAL SERVICES

Honourable Harry Van Mulligen,
Minister of Social Services

Minister's Transmittal

The Honourable Lynda Haverstock,
Lieutenant Governor,
Province of Saskatchewan

May it please Your Honour:

I respectfully submit the Annual Report of the Department of Social Services for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1999.

Sincerely,

Harry Van Mulligen,
Minister of Social Services

Deputy Minister's Transmittal

The Honourable Harry Van Mulligen
Minister of Social Services

Dear Sir,

I have the honour of submitting the Annual Report of the Department of Social Services for the year ending March 31, 1999.

Respectfully submitted,

D. Perrins

Dan Perrins,
Deputy Minister

Dan Perrins,
Deputy Minister of
Social Services

Introduction

Social Services employs 2,499 people as of March 31, 1999. These include social workers, youth workers, facility staff at Valley View Centre and support staff. The annual budget is $569.2 million.

The services the department provides help enable Saskatchewan's most vulnerable residents participate more fully in the economic and social lives of their communities. These services are delivered in a variety of ways, but primarily through the six regions that Social Services has divided the province into. These regions have most of the Department's staff, and clients will come into contact most often with the regional staff. The Department offers services directly to the public through its 29 regional and 73 day offices across the province and its 18 facilities. Some staff are co-located with other organizations and agencies to facilitate service integration. We also work with communities and community groups such as the John Howard Society which deliver services on our behalf.

The overall intent of all our services is to assist families and youth to build better lives. Our primary means of doing so are to:

- assist vulnerable families to care for and support themselves;
- provide basic income support to reduce poverty;
- protect children from abuse;
- support independent community-based care for the intellectually challenged;
- promote standards in day care; and
- work with youth who are in conflict with the law.

Saskatchewan Social Services touches the lives of hundreds of thousands of individuals and families in the province. As of March 1999 it had 117,816 individual clients. Many of them have families who are affected by our services, and many other residents of Saskatchewan are involved indirectly with us through community partners, boards and staff. By helping people support themselves economically, the department has a positive secondary effect on the economy.

During the year, the nature of the caseload will vary dramatically. Many people come into contact with Social Services because of a specific incident which, when resolved, ends their involvement with the Department. Others are long term clients, particularly those persons with physical, mental or intellectual disabilities, who may always need a degree of outside support to live their lives. Many clients have multiple needs, or require multiple services. This may be, for example, a family receiving income support which is also experiencing a crisis that results in child protection.

A word about this format

This annual report varies in format from previous ones. Overall, this report begins with the mission, mandate and organization of the Department.

Then specific activities in each program area are described. This section starts with the four divisions that provide direct service to the public (Income Security, Community Living, Child Day Care, and Family and Youth Services). They represent the bulk of Social Services' business, budget and activities, which are primarily provided through the six regions the province is divided into.

This is followed by reports from the support branches which do not provide direct public services, but which assist service divisions in delivering services to the public (e.g. computers, research).

The next section of the document provides our financial statements. The final section describes major activities Social Services undertook during the year, but which do not fall directly within its mandate (e.g. Office of Disability Issues, Action Plan for Children).

Within each section, the Division describes its programs, objectives, organization, activities, outcomes and plans for the subsequent year. In addition, in order to put a human perspective on the Department's activities, individual case studies are provided throughout the document.

For further information on Saskatchewan Social Services, please refer to its web site:
http://www.gov.sk.ca/govt/socserv/

All public reports, including previous annual reports and this annual report are posted on the web site, as are quarterly statistical reports which supplement the annual report. Readers will also find legislation, policies, and factsheets and frequently asked questions about our many programs and services.

If you have any questions or comments after reading this report, please refer to the webmaster, or call 306-933-5970.

Organization

Minister
Harry Van Mulligen

Deputy Minister
Dan Perrins

Assistant Deputy Minister
Duncan Fisher

Regina Region
Regional Director - Dave Hedlund

South East Region
Regional Director - John Anderson

South West Region
Regional Director -
Rhonda Cossette

North West Region
Regional Director - Ruth Seime

North East Region
Regional Director - Gail Hartsook

Saskatoon Region
Regional Director - Ron Pollock

Community Living
Executive Director -
Larry Moffatt

- Therapy Support
- Family Support
- Community Based Service Delivery
- Early Childhood Intervention Services
- Direct Residential Services - Valley View Centre (Moose Jaw)

Corporate Policy
Executive Director - Don Fairbairn

Organizational Development Division
Executive Director -
Heather Thurmeier

Financial Management
Executive Director - Bob Wihlidal

Communications and Public Education
Director - Bill Carney

Office of Disability Issues
Director - Daryl Stubel

Assistant Deputy Minister
Bonnie Durnford

Family and Youth
Executive Director - Richard Hazel

- Child Protection
- Alternative Care for Children
- Adoption
- Teen and Young Parent Services
- Parenting Education
- Family Violence Services
- Young Offender Services

Community Development
Acting Director - Paul Wilkinson

Child Day Care
Director - Deborah Bryck

- Information/Education
- Licensing/Monitoring
- Caregiver/Facility Support

Income Security
Executive Director - Phil Walsh

- Saskatchewan Assistance Plan
- Family Income Plan
- Saskatchewan Income Plan
- Saskatchewan Employment Supplement
- Saskatchewan Child Benefit
- Child Nutrition and Development Program
- Emergency Social Services

Technology and Property Management
Executive Director - Ron Naidu

Research and Evaluation
Director - David Rosenbluth

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Legislation

The twelve provincial Acts administered by the Department are:

- *The Adoption Act*
- *The Child and Family Services Act*
- *The Child Care Act*
- *The Donation of Food Act, 1995*
- *The Department of Social Services Act*
- *The Intercountry Adoption (Hague Convention) Implementation Act*
- *The Registered Social Workers Act*
- *The Rehabilitation Act*
- *The Residential Services Act (dual authority with the Department of Health)*
- *The Saskatchewan Assistance Act*
- *The Saskatchewan Income Plan Act*
- *The Young Offenders' Services Act*

The Department also administers many regulations under this legislation.

The Department administers portions of the federal *Young Offenders Act*.

Mandate

Social Services:

- **assists vulnerable families** to care for and support their members;
- **provides basic income support** for children, families and individuals, and works with others to reduce the risks and disadvantages caused by poverty;
- **protects children from abuse and neglect and assists people facing family violence** through prevention, education, and facilitating substitute or alternative care or shelter;
- **promotes a standard quality of child day care, and supports parents** in achieving a balance between family and other responsibilities;
- **promotes a balance of responsibility and meeting needs in youth**, and provides programs for those in conflict with the law;
- **supports independent, community-based care** for persons with mental and physical disabilities;
- **works across sectors within communities** to help them identify, own and respond to the social needs of their members; and
- **takes leadership** within and outside government to achieve this mandate.

Vision

Saskatchewan Social Services advances the social well-being of children, families and individuals who live in communities that support and enable them to reach their potential.

Principles

Actions to enhance the well-being of children, families and individuals must be:

Preventive ... Prevention is the preferable approach to meeting the needs of all children, families and individuals. At the same time, services must be targeted to those most in need of immediate intervention and care.

Collaborative ... Partnerships among all sectors within governments and communities must be developed and sustained to respond effectively to the needs of children, families and individuals.

Holistic ... Services to children, families and individuals must be holistic and client-centered, and supported by co-ordination, integration and partnerships.

Culturally Appropriate ... Responses to the needs of First Nations and Métis children, families and individuals, and those of all cultural groups, must be developed in partnership with their leaders, authorities and communities.

Supportive ... The many family, kinship and community relationships must be supported and protected.

Empowering ... Interventions and responses must encourage the child, the family, the individual and the community to participate freely in decisions affecting them.

Strategic Objectives

Strategic objectives make the Depa.tment more proactive in emerging situations. In general, these objectives are aimed at refocusing the Department's attention and intervening appropriately and effectively. The major objectives for the Department are to:

- improve the well-being of children and advance a children and families' agenda;
- support broad intervention activities and contribute to a reduction in the need for crisis intervention and treatment;
- foster effective solutions to social issues by enhancing community involvement, ownership and delivery;
- better meet client needs by co-operatively overcoming barriers between programs and services (Social Services and others) and making maximum use of all available resources;
- facilitate First Nations and Métis peoples' self-determination in social development and to provide culturally sensitive services;
- develop a more effective and efficient income support system for clients and communities; and
- strengthen theory and practice in case management, treatment services, program administration, integrated services and community development.

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Regions

The department has divided the province into six geographic regions: Regina; Saskatoon; Northwest; Northeast; Southwest and Southeast. Within these regions are a total of 29 regional offices and 73 day offices.

Most of the Department's programs are delivered through the regions, and most of the Departmental staff work in the regions. With the exception of clients who are in Community Living or Young Offender facilities, most of Social Services' clients come into contact with the Department through regional staff, in keeping with an approach of providing services locally. The addition of a centralized call centre in Regina for the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement program is an experiment with centralized services, where they are practical and appropriate.

There has always been an effort to deliver services at the local level. This includes not only offices in cities and towns, but regular visits to smaller centres, and calls to clients' homes. Contact with community organizations such as women's shelters, alcohol rehabilitation and youth centres is also encouraged and maintained. By taking this approach staff are better able to make assessments of client circumstances and provide realistic referrals to local resources.

Although each office administers the legislated programs according to provincial policies, the exact organization and implementation is tailored to the unique nature of the geographic area. This takes into account rural, urban, and northern differences as well as different cultural and socio-economic aspects of each region.

This activity required a budget allocation of $40,223,000 (does not include facilities for young offenders or the intellectually challenged).

Saskatchewan Social Services Office Locations*

Buffalo Narrows 1-800-667-7685
Box 220 235-1700
S0M 0J0

Creighton 1-800-532-9580
Box 10
S0P 0A0

Estevan 637-4550
1219 -5th St.
S4A 2V6

Fort Qu'Appelle 1-800-667-3260
177 Segwun Ave. 332-3260
S0G 1S0

Kindersley 463-5470
113-2nd Ave. E.
S0L 1S0

La Loche 1-877-371-1131
Box 70 822-1711
S0M 1G0

La Ronge 1-800-567-4066
Box 359 425-4544
S0J 1L0

Lloydminster 1-877-367-7707
4815 -50th. St. 825-6410
S9V 0M8

Meadow Lake 1-877-368-8898
Unit 5, 201-2nd St. W. 236-7500
S9X 1C7

Melfort 1-800-487-8640
107 Crawford Ave. E. 752-6100
S0E 1E0

Moose Jaw 694-3647
36 Athabaska St. W.
S6H 6V2

W.G. Davies Building
110 Ominica Street W.

Nipawin 1-800-487-8594
210-1st St. E. 862-1700
S0E 1E0

North Battleford 1-877-933-9911
405-1146 102nd St. 446-7705
S9A 1E9

Don Ross Centre

Prince Albert 1-800-487-8603
McIntosh Mall 953-2345
800 Central Ave.
S6V 6G1

West Flat Community Centre

Regina 787-3700
2045 Broad St.
S4P 3V7

Chateau Tower 787-3494
1920 Broad St.
S4P 3V6

Halifax Centre
2020 Halifax Street

Children's Justice Centre
Wascana Energy Building

Wetmore School

Rosetown 882-5400
122 -2nd Ave. W.
S0L 2V0

Saskatoon 1-877-884-1687
Midtown Village 933-5960
220 Idylwyld Dr. S.
S7K 2H6

Sturdy Stone Centre 933-5961
122-3rd Ave. N.
S7K 2H6

315 Avenue M South

CN Tower

Swift Current 778-8219
350 Cheadle St W.
S9H 4G3

Weyburn 848-2404
110 Souris Ave. N.E.
S4H 2Z9

Wynyard 554-5450
205 Bosworth St.
S0A 4T0

Yorkton 786-1300
72 Smith St. E.
S3N 2Y4

** As of March 2000, some differences from 1998-1999 listing.*

Service Divisions

Services to the public are provided through four major services:

- Income Security
- Child Day Care
- Community Living
- Family and Youth

These services are provided across the province, and are delivered primarily through the six regional offices and facilities. They constitute the majority of the Department's budget and staff.

Income Security Division

Programs and Services

Income Security provides a range of income supports and services for low-income people, intended to alleviate the effects of poverty and encourage economic independence.

In 1998-1999, the Division offered the following programs, which will be described more fully in later sections:

- Saskatchewan Assistance Plan
- Saskatchewan Child Benefit
- Saskatchewan Employment Supplement
- Family Income Plan
- Saskatchewan Income Plan (Seniors' Benefits)
- Community-based Income Security Programs
- Emergency Social Services

1998-1999 was a year of change for the Income Security Division. During the year, the *Saskatchewan Child Benefit* (SCB) and *Saskatchewan Employment Supplement* (SES) were launched, as part of the government's *Building Independence* initiative. Building Independence is an interdepartmental strategy to address child poverty and help families move into and stay in the workforce, and includes programs from Saskatchewan Health (*Family Health Benefits*) and Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training (*Provincial Training Allowance*).

Objectives of the Division

The objectives of the Income Security Division are to:

- provide basic income support for children, families and individuals to reduce the risks and disadvantages caused by poverty;
- provide services and supports to enhance client independence through access to employment, training programs and other measures;
- support communities to develop services which contribute to the social and economic well-being of low-income children, families and individuals.

Throughout 1998-1999, the Division continued its strategy of income security redesign. Income security redesign aims to enhance opportunities for low-income people to participate more fully in economic and social life. This involves reducing barriers to education and work, and providing the supports necessary to help individuals and families achieve independence. The new Building Independence programs implemented during the year were major elements of the first phase of redesign, and provide a foundation for further redesign initiatives.

Saskatchewan's approach to income security redesign received favorable comment in a recent study by the Organization for Economic and Cooperative Development (OECD), which compared social assistance programs in western countries (*The Battle Against Exclusion, OECD Paris 1999*).

Income Security Programs	1998-1999 Actual Exp.	Staffing	Delivery
Saskatchewan Assistance Plan	$ 263,024,034	261	Regional
Saskatchewan Child Benefit	56,526,058		Central
Saskatchewan Employment Supplement	7,427,351	31	Central
Family Income Plan	2,031,150		Central
Saskatchewan Income Plan (Seniors' Benefits)	12,036,912	3	Central
Community-based Income Security Programs	1,915,110		Regional/Central
Income Security Administration	3,097,512	35	Central
Total Expenditures	$ 349,361,127	330	

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S9V 0M8

Meadow Lake 1-877-368-8898
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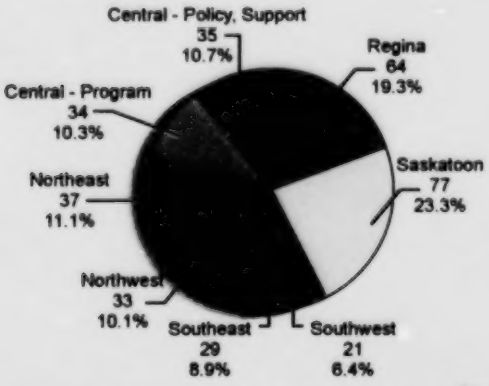
Budget, Staffing and Delivery

The total expenditure for Income Security programs in 1998-1999 was $346,058,127. Of this amount, 99.1 per cent was provided in the form of payments or benefits to low income families and individuals.

Income Security has 330 staff in regional and central offices. Approximately 90 per cent of these positions provide direct service and support to clients. Regional staff provide frontline delivery of the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan (SAP) as well as client and community services. Regional management are responsible for activities in their region and report on their operations centrally. Central management and staff monitor accountability; provide policy, program and technical support; and provide centralized delivery of several programs (SES, Family Income Plan, Saskatchewan Income Plan).

Number of Regional and Central Staff



Saskatchewan Assistance Plan

The Saskatchewan Assistance Plan (SAP) provides financial assistance to people in need who have little or no income. This program is commonly referred to as welfare.

SAP provides a safety net for people whose needs cannot be met due to unemployment or other circumstances — through the market economy, or through federal social security programs, such as Employment Insurance.

Any person in financial need may apply for social assistance. Social Services' staff work with clients to establish needs and to develop case plans for independence. Clients who are unable to find employment may be referred to the nearest Canada-Saskatchewan Career and Employment Services office for assistance in accessing training and employment opportunities.

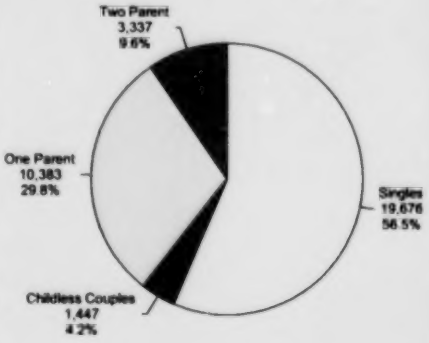
1998-1999 program changes within the SAP program include:

- larger exemptions on earned income to provide greater incentive for clients to participate in the workforce;
- an increase to the rental allowance for subsidized public housing units to create equality between social assistance tenants and other renters;
- the introduction of interim child allowances to alleviate any support interruptions experienced by families awaiting the newly combined Canada Child Tax Benefit/ Saskatchewan Child Benefit;
- an increase in residential care rates for operators of Approved Private Service Homes to more accurately reflect the level of support required by individuals with intellectual and mental disabilities;
- a new $25 monthly allowance for residents of Approved Private Service Homes to support participation in quality-of-life activities in the community.

SAP Caseload Profile

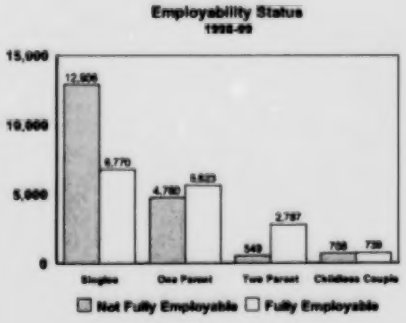
Single persons and one-parent families are the two largest segments of the SAP caseload.

Average Caseload Composition
1998-99



In 1998-1999, about 55 per cent of all cases deemed to be unable or only partially able to work, were in a training program, or were employed in a sheltered workshop. Among single-person cases, 65 per cent were considered not fully employable.

Employability Status
1998-99



Environmental Factors affecting SAP

The success of social assistance recipients in getting jobs is influenced strongly by unemployment levels in the economy. In general, an increase in the number of unemployed in Saskatchewan will result in an increase in the SAP caseload.

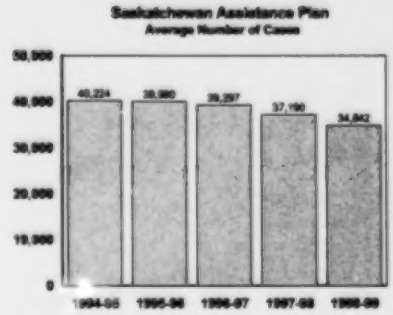
Periods of recession, with accompanying high unemployment levels, are typically followed by significant increases in the social assistance caseload. While caseloads decline during the post-recession recoveries, they do not usually return to their pre-recession levels. This "ratchet effect" in social assistance caseloads has been noted in most western countries. Often, recessions result in fundamental restructuring of the economy and downsizing in some industries, which render some jobs obsolete.

Historically, in all economic cycles there are segments of the population that tend to have higher unemployment levels than the average population. These include single parents, youth, Aboriginal peoples, and persons with disabilities.

Education level is a key factor which may affect both an individual's ability to find employment and his or her expected income. About 75 per cent of SAP cases are headed by persons with less than grade 12. In contrast, among Saskatchewan's total labor force, 23 per cent have less than grade 12. (*Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey, 1998*)

The presence of children in a case also tends to influence the ease with which families can move from social assistance to employment. The cost of child care and the potential loss of health benefits for children are two barriers to independence. Historically, families with children have tended to stay longer on social assistance than single persons or childless couples.

The Building Independence programs were specifically designed to help reduce these traditional barriers which prevent people on assistance from moving into the workforce.



SAP Caseload Trends

The social assistance caseload has been declining annually for the past four years. This downward trend is

SAP Case Example: Barriers faced by clients

Shirley, (not her real name), who is a mentally-challenged single mother, has had frequent involvement with Income Security since 1990. Traditional methods of assisting her integration into the work force (e.g. Job Search, New Careers) proved fruitless as her disabilities resulted in poor problem-solving skills and inadequate organizational skills. Her inability to maintain employment or experience success resulted in low self-esteem.

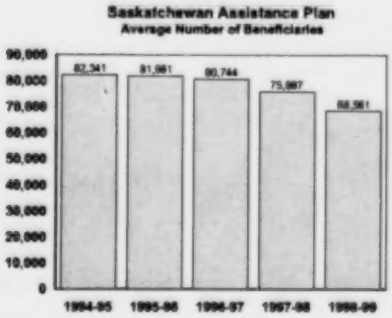
Shirley was assigned a caseworker from the Community Living Division (CLD) of Social Services. The two established rapport and developed a trusting relationship. Eventually, the young mother was registered in a daily-living skills course. Once her self-esteem had improved and support services began, Shirley was able to imagine a future for herself and her young child.

In order to pursue ongoing support services offered through the Ability Centre, Shirley required a transition into the work force that would allow her to leave her child for extensive periods during the day. The client, SAP worker, and CLD worker embarked on developing a realistic case plan. Under the case plan, Shirley worked and attended classes at the Ability Center while her child attended daycare. This case plan not only helped Shirley become a working mother but it also served to prevent further involvement of the Department with this family, through Child Welfare services.

As a result of the co-ordinated approach, Shirley has been able to continue accepting new support services into her home. She is now working full-time while her child attends daycare. A Supported Independent Living Program worker is also involved with her; helping her balance work and family, reducing protection risks to her child and enabling Shirley to experience further success. As well, the Early Childhood Intervention and Teen and Young Parent workers from the Department, and the speech/language pathologist now find this young mother to be more open in her interaction with them.

generally due to an improved provincial economy and the new Building Independence programs introduced in 1997 and 1998, and the Provincial Training Strategy.

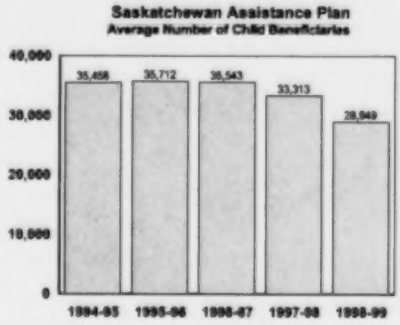
In 1998-1999, an average of 34,842 cases (individuals and families) received benefits under SAP. This represents a decrease of 2,348 in the number of cases from 1997-98 (a six per cent decrease) and a decrease of 5,382 cases from the 1994-95 average (a 13 per cent decrease).



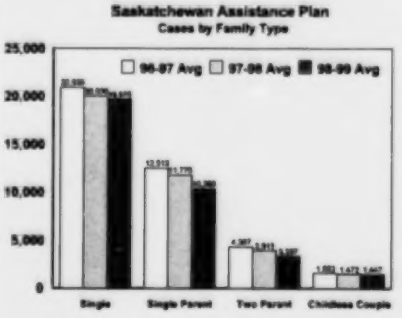
As a result of the caseload decrease, there were 7,326 fewer persons (including 4,364 fewer children) relying on social assistance in 1998-1999 than there were the previous year (a 10 per cent decrease). Since 1994-1995, the average number of persons receiving social assistance has declined by 13,780 (a 17 per cent decrease).

The most significant caseload decreases have been among families with children. The Building Independence programs provided supports and incentives designed to help families with children move to and stay in the labor market.

As expected, these new programs had an immediate impact on the social assistance caseload. Preliminary information indicates, that by March 31, 1999, an estimated 1,400 to 1,500 fewer families and 3,000 to 3,200 fewer children relied on social assistance as a result of the introduction of these programs.



Approximately 70 per cent of the caseload reduction consisted of single-parent cases. Single parents often experience barriers that make it difficult to move to independence; however, experience shows that these individuals are highly motivated to attain employment. The new Building Independence programs provide supports to facilitate this transition. An evaluation is being developed to assist in further analysis of the impact of the new programs.



The average monthly cost per SAP case in 1998-1999 was $627. This represents a six per cent decrease from the previous year. This decrease is primarily due to the impact of the SCB and SES. These redesign initiatives provide basic support for children outside of the social assistance system.

SAP Accountability

A variety of financial controls are employed within the SAP program to ensure the eligibility of all clients and the accuracy of benefits. These controls include:

- an annual program audit. Each year a random sampling of cases is audited to monitor financial error trends. The 1998-1999 program audit showed that the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan continues to operate below the four per cent acceptable error limit established in consultation with the Provincial Auditor;
- an automated system which registers all clients on a common data base and prevents benefits from being issued to the same client from more than one office;
- automated computer matching with other programs to verify circumstances and income. This includes matching with Human Resources Development Canada (which administers Employment Insurance), Revenue Canada, and the Workers' Compensation Board.

In October 1998, Saskatchewan entered into an agreement with all provinces (except Quebec) and territories to share information to ensure clients do not collect social assistance in more than one jurisdiction at the same time.

In addition to improving accuracy, the financial controls are designed to be non-intrusive to the client. These efforts support the Department's overall strategy to deliver a high standard of service while maintaining accountability.

SAP Delivery to Northern Bands

Social Services has agreements with five northern First Nations Bands (Peter Ballantyne, La Ronge, Montreal Lake, Black Lake, and Hatchet Lake) for the delivery of social assistance to off-reserve Band members in adjacent communities.

The Bands act as agents of Saskatchewan Social Services. The Division conducts audits of SAP cases administered by the Bands to ensure assistance is provided in accordance with SAP regulations and policies. In addition, the Division delivers ongoing support and training to Band staff on SAP program policies and regulations.

In 1998-1999, the average monthly caseload for the northern Bands was 563 cases. The total annual expenditure was $4.9 million.

These arrangements advance the partnership approach of service delivery between First Nations and the province.

Building Independence — Investing in Families

SAP underwent a major structural reform with the introduction of the Building Independence initiatives in 1998. These programs are designed to provide families with incentives to have income outside of social assistance, and to make it easier for people to enter or remain in the workforce.

These new programs support several of the Department's key strategic directions.

Saskatchewan Child Benefit

Introduced July 1, 1998, the Saskatchewan Child Benefit (SCB) provides a monthly allowance to assist lower income families with the cost of raising children. SCB helps families who are making the transition from social assistance to employment. The program also helps parents in low income jobs by providing support for their children. The SCB is administered on behalf of the province by Revenue Canada and benefits are combined with the National Child Benefit Supplement.

Through the National Child Benefit initiative, the federal government provides funds for children's basic needs, on a phased-in basis over several years. When this initiative was introduced in Saskatchewan, however, the government provided additional money upfront through the SCB so families would be eligible to receive their full benefit immediately.

As of March 31, 1999, SCB benefits were being provided to approximately 104,000 Saskatchewan children in nearly 50,000 families, including 8,800 families who live on-reserve. The average provincial benefit per family over the first nine months of operation was $162 per month. The federal Department of Indian and Northern Affairs covers the cost for on-reserve families.

Of the 50,000 families receiving benefits, approximately 30,000 (60 per cent) were single-parent families and 20,000 (40 per cent) were two-parent families. Nearly 90 per cent of all single-parent families in Saskatchewan receive SCB.

Saskatchewan Employment Supplement

The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement (SES), also introduced July 1, 1998, provides a monthly supplement to wages, child and/or spousal maintenance payments, and self-employment earnings of lower income parents. The program assists parents with the child-related costs of going to work and supports their decision to work.

From July 1998 to March 1999, an average of 5,150 families received monthly SES benefits. Approximately 70 per cent of families receiving the SES benefit were single parents and 30 per cent were two-parent families. The average monthly payment per family was $160.

SES is administered from a central call centre located in Regina, using innovative technology to deliver the program in an efficient, cost-effective, and user-friendly manner. For convenience, the call centre features extended hours of operation and is open on weekends. In the nine-month period from July 1998 to March 1999, over 93,000 calls were fielded by call centre staff.

Case Example: Saskatchewan Employment Supplement

A counsellor at a Canada-Saskatchewan Career and Employment Services (CES) office shares some of her case experiences with the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement.

"A young man on employment insurance came to CES seeking assistance in finding new employment. He was referred to a job and the employer was very interested in hiring him. The young man came back for advice, as he really wanted to accept the job but was concerned that the salary would not be enough to meet his family's needs. We discussed the employment supplement program and provided him with the information needed to inquire about his eligibility. Upon phoning the call centre he learned he would eligible for SES benefits. He accepted the job knowing that his income from wages and the supplement would be sufficient to provide for his family and pay his bills. Because of this program, the needs of this young man, his family and the employer were fully met.

"A young family came and spoke to me about their stressful financial situation. The young man worked full-time for $8 per hour. His wife wasn't able to work as they had four small children. She had no specific training and felt the cost of child care would be more than what she could earn at a job. I agreed that at this stage of their lives, it was probably best for the mother to stay at home. One of the programs we discussed was the employment supplement. After contacting the toll-free phone number, the family learned they were eligible for SES and that all of their needs could be met. Shortly thereafter, I spoke to the young mother, and what a difference in her attitude and appearance! It seemed like the weight of the world had been lifted off her shoulders. She said the quality of their life appeared to change over night."

In closing, the counsellor from CES added, "I do truly believe that SES is essential for many of our clients to make a permanent transition to the labor force. I believe SES and programs like the child benefit are creating the bridge which many families need in order to have a quality of life that they and their children deserve."

Family Income Plan

The Family Income Plan (FIP) was started in 1974 to provide an income supplement for low income families with dependent children. Payments under this program helped families with food costs, clothing and other essential expenses for their children.

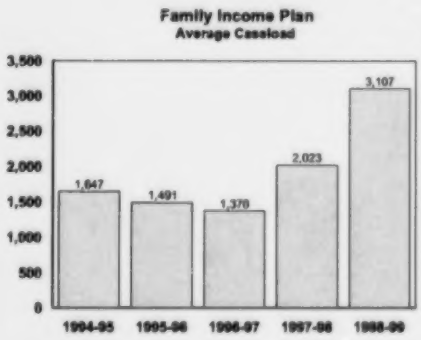
The Family Income Plan was retired June 30, 1998, and was replaced by the July 1, 1998 introduction of the Building Independence programs. Childrens' benefits previously provided under FIP were replaced by SCB, or a combination of SCB and SES.

FIP Caseload Trends

Over the three-month period from April to June 1998, when the program terminated, an average of 3,107 families, representing 6,586 children, received FIP benefits. The average monthly payment over this period was $219, down marginally from $224 in 1997-1998.

Virtually all families receiving FIP in June 1998 qualified for the SCB. Families who had monthly employment or child support income over $125 were encouraged to apply for SES. Approximately 1,530 former FIP families received both SCB and SES benefits over the period July 1998 to March 1999. In addition, all families receiving FIP in June 1998 were eligible for Family Health Benefits.

To ensure that no families receiving FIP in June 1998 received less support for their children through the new SCB and SES programs, a provincial Child Benefit Adjustment was available to continue the level of their June 1998 FIP benefit.



Saskatchewan Income Plan (SIP)

This program provides supplementary income for senior citizens who have little or no income other than the federal Old Age Security (OAS) pension and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS). Eligibility for SIP benefits is automatically determined through the GIS application.

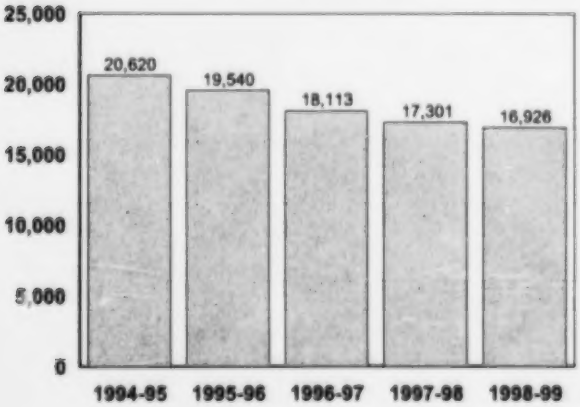
SIP benefits are combined with the federal Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement (OAS/GIS) into a single consolidated monthly payment delivered by the federal government on behalf of Social Services. This arrangement helps keep administration costs low. In combination with the OAS and GIS, SIP benefits help to reduce the incidence and depth of low income among Saskatchewan seniors. Among Canadian provinces, Saskatchewan has the highest percentage of seniors but one of the lowest rates of poverty among the elderly.

SIP Caseload Trend

In 1998-1999, an average of 16,926 low income seniors received benefits each month. SIP benefits added over $700 to the annual incomes of these individuals.

The number of people receiving benefits under the program has been declining steadily over time. This is the result of an increasing proportion of seniors receiving Canada Pension Plan or other pension benefits.

Saskatchewan Income Plan
Average Caseload



Community-Based Income Security Programs

The Division continues to explore effective ways of providing services to the people of Saskatchewan, including alternatives that enhance community involvement, ownership and delivery. Community-based programs are managed regionally and co-ordinated centrally.

Child Nutrition and Development Program

Under the Child Nutrition and Development Program, government and communities work together to reduce the nutritional risks to children from low income families. Community funding provided through the program is used for food, nutritional education, and family support projects.

In 1998-1999, funding of $1.15 million was provided to over 40 projects delivered by community-based organizations, local governments, schools and school divisions across the province. Community and school-based nutrition programs provide meals to children in need. These projects deliver over one million meals annually to children throughout the province. Family support initiatives such as community kitchens, community gardens, and other self-sufficiency projects help low income families acquire skills and abilities necessary for independence.

Service providers observe that children who receive proper nutrition and nutritional education have better school attendance, are more attentive in class, have improved social skills, and better relationships with peers, teachers and the community.

Child Nutrition and Development Project Example: Regina's Food Security Project

Regina's Food Security Project enables families and individuals to access high quality, safe and nutritious food at an affordable price. The project includes such initiatives as the Good Food Box, community kitchens and community gardens. The project also provides instruction in preferred cooking methods, preserving and freezing foods and provides participants with an opportunity to grow their own food.

Two staff members of the Regina Region (Community Development Team) of Social Services are working at the Regina Food Bank. A portion of the staff's time is dedicated to working directly with food bank staff and participants of the food security programs. This close connection with the community helps the team identify structural issues, such as transportation or child care, which contribute to hardship for low income people and to develop innovative, flexible and practical responses to their needs.

Other Income Security Community-Based Programs

Throughout the year, additional funding helped community organizations develop services and approaches which contributed to the social and economic well-being of low income persons in Saskatchewan. In 1998-1999, funding totalling $.76 million was provided to the following organizations:

- the Unemployed Workers Help and Counselling Centre in Regina, to assist workers with alternative income claims such as Employment Insurance;
- the Salvation Army in Saskatoon, to provide after-hours emergency financial services for the Saskatoon Regional Income Security office;
- five community-based organizations, located in Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, Yorkton and Prince Albert to provide trusteeship services for social assistance clients. These agencies assist clients with budgeting skills.

Emergency Social Services

The Emergency Social Services Program provides specialized services to meet the non-medical needs of persons affected by disasters. In 1998, Social Services staff evacuated 649 people from 15 northern communities due to the threat of forest fire or smoke in the community.

The Division continued its work with Saskatchewan Emergency Planning, other government departments, community-based organizations, law enforcement and fire-fighting agencies, to develop an improved trauma/disaster response system for the province.

Income Security Staff Development and Support

Training was provided to 270 Income Security staff and personnel from collateral and community-based agencies. Training was provided to help staff make the transition to new jobs to bring staff up to date on new treatments and issues (e.g. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome), and to teach new emergency measure procedures.

Plans for 1999-2000

The new Building Independence programs introduced in 1997 and 1998 represent the first significant structural changes to provincial income support programs in 30 years. This first stage of income security redesign has benefited thousands of low income individuals and families in Saskatchewan. As part of a continuing process of redesign, additional steps are planned to further enhance income support programs and service delivery; informally this process is being called Phase II of Redesign.

The focus of Phase II is to build on fundamental principles embodied in Phase I. Over time, programs will be developed to provide more mainstream supports that encourage a closer attachment to the labor market and participation in the community.

An additional objective is to enhance client service by taking advantage of newly developed work processes such as call centre technology, simplified benefit structures, and programs that are easier for clients to understand.

The Division will also work with other programs, departments, organizations and community service providers to ensure that services complement each other, address the needs of low income people, and build on the strengths of individuals and families. Training and employment services for youth, and housing needs of low income people are two of several strategic areas that will be examined in collaboration with other partners.

The Department believes that a phased, incremental approach to reform is the most beneficial way to implement the Division's strategic objectives. This approach will create the conditions necessary to achieve redesign, such as detailed policy analysis, consensus-building among departments and governments, development of practical initiatives consistent with strategic goals, evaluation, workable implementation and transition plans, and sustainable resourcing.

Community Living Division

Programs and Services

Community Living provides programs and services for persons with intellectual disabilities and their families, in the community, in sheltered workshops and in the Valley View Centre in Moose Jaw. Over the past two decades, the Division has tried to move as many people as possible with intellectual disabilities out of institutions and into the community, with the appropriate support.

Clients of Community Living Division are primarily individuals with intellectual disabilities who require various supports to live in their community. Supports are focused in the following areas:

- Family services;
- Early childhood;
- Residential;
- Vocational.

These services are provided by Department staff located throughout the province, and through more than 130 community-based agencies in numerous communities across Saskatchewan.

Valley View Centre provides 393 beds for persons with intellectual disabilities.

Objectives of Community Living

The mission of the Community Living Division is to support the development of inclusive communities for individuals with developmental disabilities. The Division assists individuals, families and communities to ensure that services are appropriate and accessible. The Division empowers those with intellectual disabilities to make choices regarding the services they receive.

The Division delivers its programs and services primarily through an extensive system of community-based social, residential, vocational and early childhood agencies. It works in partnership with provincially-based representatives and advocacy organizations. The Division is a signator of a three-way partnership agreement between Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres and the Saskatchewan Association of Community Living.

This partnership agreement sets out a common vision and set of principles that are based on people with intellectual disabilities having inherent dignity. The three partners share a "joint commitment that people be surrounded by inclusive communities which respect and value independence. The three partners have agreed to work together on strategic planning, specific new programs and projects, increased communication and on the development of new partnerships between other agencies and organizations."

The program activities of the Division reflect the overall Departmental objective of supporting Saskatchewan citizens to live in their community.

Since its inception in 1972, the Community Living Division has based its activities and operations on the principle of "normalization."

Major elements of the Division's service philosophy include:

- vulnerable individuals, particularly persons with intellectual disabilities and those who care for them, must be surrounded by supportive communities;
- families have the primary responsibility to care for their members;
- all services should be provided as close to home as possible and not separate family members;
- any planning or service development must reflect the individual needs of the person;
- individuals and their families must be empowered with the ability to make choices;
- development is a lifelong process and all individuals are capable of further growth and learning;
- services such as education, housing and employment must be accessible to all. These services must not be segregated but inclusive of those with disabilities;
- services should remove barriers and meet the needs of an individual but not in a manner that further separates them from their community or impedes their growth and development;
- services must be provided in a manner that is least intrusive to a person's freedom or regular routine.

Budget and Staffing

Services provided by the Community Living Division are delivered through the Department's six regions. Regional staff (53 positions) are located in 15 major centres in Saskatchewan; seven central administration positions are located in Regina.

The Division also operates Valley View Centre in Moose Jaw with a staff of 468.

The total divisional budget allocation of 1998-1999 was $55,781,000. The Department funded many new initiatives in 1998-1999 including two new group homes in Regina, group living programs in Saskatoon, Regina, Estevan, Nokomis, Meadow Lake, Moose Jaw and Biggar; and a supportive living program in Saskatoon.

In addition, numerous programs throughout the province received additional funds to either increase the number of funded spaces or enhance the supports within existing programs. For example, Prince Albert supportive living program received funds to enhance the services by 40 hours per week; additional program staff was provided in the activity centres in Estevan, Regina, Saskatoon, Redvers, Moose Jaw and Meadow Lake to support changing client needs.

Community Living Programs: Community Case Management

Social work staff support individuals, families and private-service home operators through individual assessment, planning, and case management. As well, staff provide advice and assistance to community boards which provide residential and vocational assistance.

While the size of caseloads has not changed substantially over the past decade, there is an increasing percentage of clients with high needs.

In 1998-1999, the Division provided community case management support to 3,600 persons and families.

Therapy Support

Each region has a program consultant who is available to agencies or individuals for consultation and who provides training on ethics, behavioral intervention and comprehensive individual support planning.

Family Support

Family support services are designed to:

- help parents and their children through the initial adjustment to disabilities;
- diminish or eliminate problems in family functioning caused by a disability;
- help families and the community service system establish a developmental model for preschool and school-aged children;
- help families make appropriate planning decisions about educational, housing and lifestyle issues at appropriate times during development.

Respite services are an essential component of the Division's family support initiatives. These services help families by providing short-term residential care to allow for planned breaks or for crisis management. Respite services are provided by resource homes located in Regina and Saskatoon, or in the case of families not having easy access to the resource homes, through the Outreach Program. The Outreach Program provides funding to offset the cost incurred by a family in accommodating their family member in their own home or other local resource as needed.

In 1998-1999, the Division made available 5,800 days of respite support through the resource homes, and over 23,000 days of respite support for over 700 Saskatchewan families through the Outreach Program. Total respite expenditures made by the Department in the support of individuals and families were approximately $1.1 million.

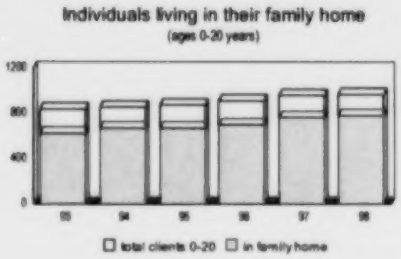
Additional respite services in rural Saskatchewan are provided by a number of group homes which maintain a space in their facility for this purpose. Such services are available in Melville, Hague, Prince Albert, Porcupine Plain, North Battleford, Kinistino, Outlook and Kindersley.

The use of this resource by families has seen tremendous growth over the past decade.

In keeping with the philosophy of Family Centred Services, the division also supports families whose children have intensive support needs that cannot be served with existing respite services. In these situations, individualized support plans are developed with the family and facilitated through use of preventive service provisions in *The Child and Family Services Act*. In 1998-1999

the division supported 54 families for a total expenditure of $348,650.

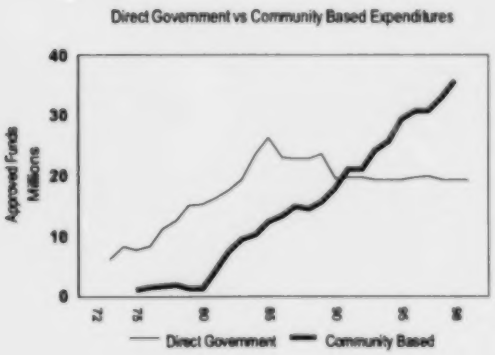
The majority of children and young adults on the Community Living caseload reside in their family homes. This number has increased over the past several years.



Community-based Service

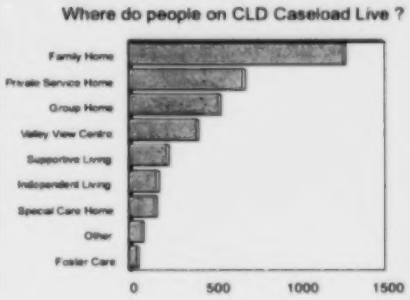
Since its inception, the Division has been guided by the principle that services should be community-based and locally-controlled. Additionally, the Division promotes a broad range of options to assure the least restrictive setting in each case.

The following chart illustrates the growth of funding to community-based organizations since the early seventies.



The Department is increasingly involved in community partnerships where several agencies work together to provide services to meet their community's needs.

Residential Services in the Community



Group homes ($17.53 million) provide accommodation, personal care and individualized programming in a family-like setting. Group homes usually accommodate no more than six people. Most residents attend organized daytime activity such as those provided in schools, sheltered workshops and activity centres.

In group living homes, individuals share a home and are responsible for their own basic shelter costs. Community Living Division provides funds for support staff that may be required.

Approved Private Service Homes ($10.5 million) are licensed under *The Residential Services Act*. Home operators provide direct care services for people with mental and physical disabilities.

A new rate structure was implemented in 1997-1998 which provides a more consistent payment system for the daily living supports provided to persons living in these homes.

Supportive Living Programs ($1.76 million) provide the necessary supports to enable adults with intellectual disabilities to live in their own homes or apartments.

Supported Apartment Living Programs ($6.39 million) provide an alternative for those who need more than supportive living but less than the supports of a group home.

Vocational/Developmental Services

Activity Centres ($6.39 million) are facilities designed for individuals who have limited motor and sensory development. Programming emphasizes basic living skills, socialization, and recreation. Although some activities may be of a productive nature, they are secondary to the primary goal of maximizing an individual's potential in the community setting.

Sheltered Workshops ($3.15 million) focus on training and production. Clients develop work and social skills until they are able to reach their potential level of independence or obtain competitive employment. A portion of the profit realized by workshops is returned to clients.

A number of programs provide day activities that range from full-time, centre-based activities to integration of seniors into existing programs.

Long-term Employment Program positions ($.6 million) ensure ongoing employment for persons with disabilities by providing support services such as job coaching or wage subsidy initiatives.

In 1998-1999, over 180 individuals were successfully supported in employment through the program.

Early Childhood Intervention Services

This program provides home-based training and support to parents of children up to five years of age with developmental disabilities. Programming occurs mainly in the child's home. The program is administered by non-profit, chiefly parent-controlled community boards.

A provincial council provides a forum to develop standards and discuss new ideas.

In 1998-1999, the Division provided over $1.78 million to 16 Early Childhood Intervention Programs. The Department funded 20 new spaces for a total of 506 spaces.

Funding for Advocacy and Support

Grants totalling $1.2 million were made to several provincial organizations to provide advocacy and specialized resource services on behalf of people with disabilities.

Valley View Centre

Valley View Centre, Moose Jaw provides long term care services for people with intellectual disabilities. Valley View Centre is home to 393 adults whose needs can not currently be met within the wider community. This includes North View Home, Prince Albert, a twelve bed community living residence. The Centre is accredited nationally with the Canadian Council on Health Service Accreditation.

Staff enjoy a close relationship with the Family Advisory Group. This group is comprised of eight family members who work together with Centre staff to develop new ideas, examine concerns of families, and develop plans to enhance the quality of life for those people who live at the Centre.

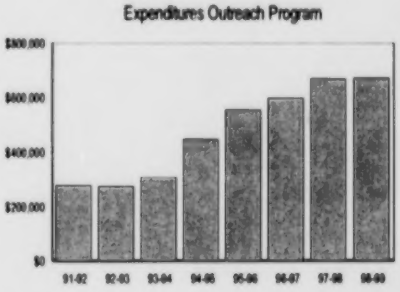
Valley View Centre provides a wide range of services to the resident organized around the values of respect, compassion, teamwork, equality, honesty, humor, and communication.

Valley View Centre operates Camp Thunderbird. Camp Thunderbird is located at Candle Lake and provides camping services for approximately 400 people with intellectual disabilities who live throughout Saskatchewan. Camp Thunderbird is open from June to August of each year.

Admissions to Valley View Centre are limited. All community options are explored before consideration is given to admitting a person to the Centre. In 1996-1997, 20 people were admitted to Valley View Centre and 19 people returned to live in the greater community. In the 1998-1999 fiscal year, four people were admitted to the Centre and three people were discharged. The current trend is expected to continue.

Key Trends

- Though overall caseload numbers have not changed significantly over the past decade, the number of clients with severe and challenging complex needs is becoming a larger portion of the individuals served by the Division.
- The number of young people (clients younger than 21) residing in their family home continues to increase.
- There has been increased funding for support services to families. For example the following table illustrates how expenditures for respite services provided by the Outreach Program have increased over the past decade.



- There has been a shift in adult vocational services to employment initiatives and options for individuals who traditionally have been served in a sheltered workshop setting.
- Communities and their agencies are increasingly engaging individuals with developmental disabilities in the job/work side of living in the community.

Plans for 1999-2000

The Department proposes to work with the Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres and the Saskatchewan Association for Community Living in the review of departmental service agreements and contracts, and the establishment of program standards in the community-based network of vocational, residential, and supported-employment initiatives.

The Division will investigate new and creative models of service delivery that support communities in responding to the residential and vocational needs of their citizens, including those with the greatest intellectual/behavioral challenges.

Case Example

Mark lived with his parents until he was 21 years old. At that time, Mark and his family began to examine other residential choices as Mark had expressed a desire to have his own place.

Together with departmental staff, they looked at a number of options, including a group home with full 24-hour supervision that seemed to be more than what was required to meet Mark's needs. The supportive living program, which provides between four and 10 hours of service per week, did not provide enough support.

Ultimately, Mark chose to move into a home with two other young men and share expenses.

Each of the roommates is responsible for his share of the basic costs of running the household. The Division provides staff to support these young men during times when they require some assistance but it is not the 24-hour day care they would receive in a traditional group home setting.

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Child Day Care Division

Programs and Services

Child Day Care supports families by promoting high quality early childhood care and education of children.

The Division performs the following activities:

- licenses child day care centres (group child care services) and family child care homes (private individuals providing child care in their home), and establishes a minimum standard of care in licensed child care facilities;
- monitors licensed child care facilities ensuring licensing standards are maintained;
- investigates unlicensed or over-enrolled private child care operations, ensuring children are protected from risks associated with too many children and/or too few caregivers;
- supports parents and caregivers by providing funding and consultative supports to help licensed facilities offer quality programs and access to licensed care;
- informs the public about early childhood education and development, and ensures caregivers are adequately trained;
- provides research, information, education and offers consultative supports to individuals and community groups to assist them in identifying or developing child care services appropriate to their needs;
- co-ordinates service delivery and promotes integration of services for children and families.

Objectives of Child Day Care Division

The mission of the Child Day Care Division is to support families by promoting high quality early childhood care and education of children.

Under the provisions of *The Child Care Act* and *The Child Care Regulations*, child day care services are regulated to reduce risks to children.

Organization of Child Day Care Division

The Division's 19 staff positions provide licensing and consultative services and central office administration, from the Department's six regional offices and service centres. The Child Care Subsidy office, located in Regina, has another 16 staff to administer the parent subsidy program and make payments to licensed child care programs. The Division's budget is $16.74 million.

Licensing, Monitoring, Inspection

The Division works to ensure Saskatchewan families have access to licensed child care services for the supplemental (non-parental) care of their children.

In 1998-1999, 12 child care consultants and two program managers directed the annual inspection, re-licensing and ongoing monitoring of over 450 child care facilities. These child care consultants also manage closures and licence new day care facilities.

In the fall of 1998, 26 new licensed child care spaces were opened in Saskatchewan high schools for infants of teen students.

Programs	Budget ($17.914 M)	Regulatory Services	Non-Regulatory Services
Unlicensed child care services	Admin - $936,540	Investigations	Consultation Support Education
Licensed Child Care Centre Program		Licensing Monitoring Investigations Grant Funding Parent Subsidies Program Development	Consultation Support Education Service Integration
Licensed Family Child Care Home Program			
Teen Infant Child Care Program	Grants - $842,180		
Special Needs Program	Grants - $564,050	Licensing Grant Funding	
Child Care Facilities Grant Program	Grants - $4,805,770	Grant Funding	Administration
Child Care Subsidy Program	Admin - $496,460 Program - 10,269,000	Parent Subsidies: Child Day Care Division is responsible for child care regulation and policy and program funding. Income Security Division provides income support policy direction and delivers the program.	Administration

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By the 1998-1999 year-end there was a total net increase of six centres and four homes adding 241 additional spaces to the province's total licensed spaces.

As of March 31, 1999, there were 139 licensed child day care centres operating in the province with a total of 5,051 child care spaces. An additional 319 family child care providers were licensed to operate some 2,314 spaces in their homes. These spaces provide licensed services for approximately 5.4 per cent of children under 12-years-old with working mothers in the province.

Two of the Division's major initiatives are to increase the availability of licensed child care services for infants and to improve child care availability in rural communities. An expansion to licensed rural child care services is challenging because of small populations and seasonal work patterns that make it difficult to develop and sustain child care operations.

In 1998-1999, the Division added new assessment tools to the family child care licensing process to improve the quality of care in the licensed family child care program. The assessments determine what supports are available to the provider and her family and whether the family environment for the care of children is appropriate.

The Division often fields concerns about unlicensed individuals caring for too many children in their homes (*The Child Care Act* limits the number of children in care to eight.) The Division investigates complaints to ensure compliance with the legislation. Enforcement in these situations requires sensitivity to the rights of parents to make their own child care decisions while preserving the integrity of the legislation.

Supporting Parents, Facilities and Caregivers

The Income Security Division administers financial support for low income families needing child care. During 1998-1999, the Income Security Division delivered the Child Care Subsidy Program to licensed child care facilities on behalf of nearly 3,400 children from about 2,600 low income families. The monthly subsidy averaged $217 per child and helped some 2,300 single parents, primarily women, and 300 two-parent families, participate in the workforce or receive training. These figures are consistent with those of the past several years.

The Division applied and managed an increase to the Child Care Worker Wage Enhancement Grant. In order to be eligible, centre staff must meet minimum training levels required by *The Child Care Regulations*. The maximum grant per trained staff in 1998-99 was $225 per month (a $75 increase). Preliminary estimates indicate that effective April 1, 1998, the average centre worker in Saskatchewan received a 32 cent an hour pay increase as a result of the grant increase, for a total estimated salary increase of 96 cents an hour after the third year of the grant.

Information and Education

An informed public and a trained child care workforce will support and encourage the high quality care of children.

The Division spends a $40,000 communications budget to educate the public about quality early childhood care and education, and how to identify and manage good quality care. These funds are directed at producing, purchasing or publishing a variety of resources for parents and/or caregivers as well as providing training opportunities involving the care, guidance and development of children.

Program Development

Many unique and innovative programs and services have been developed at the community level over the past few years. In 1998-1999, the Division completed evaluations of a number of programs, including the Saskatoon District Health Child Care Society Project and the Rural Extended Family Child Care Home pilot program. Evaluations have shown positive results in providing more flexible and/or suitable care for shift-working and rural families. With their unique needs and barriers, rural and northern Saskatchewan continue to have difficulties developing or sustaining solutions to their child care challenges.

The Teen Infant Family Child Care Home program in Moose Jaw and Weyburn was reviewed and evaluated in consideration of a more widespread model of care to serve the children of teen-aged parents completing high school. A network involving the schools, caregivers, government and other agencies is committed to helping these young parents and children develop to their potential. This program was deemed to be successful at both keeping young mothers in school and

providing quality early childhood experiences for their young children.

The Division also began negotiations to transfer provincial authority for child care services on-reserve to allow First Nations' people to govern their own child care services.

Plans for 1999-2000

The Division will actively participate in strategic policy planning in relation to early childhood strategies in 1999-2000.

1999-2000 will primarily be focused on finalizing the Special Needs program review and preparing for implementation of a redesigned program, as well as proceeding to amend *The Child Care Regulations* to reflect the program changes made in recent years. One such amendment will involve the transfer of authority for on-reserve child care services to First Nations' agencies.

More specifically, 1999-2000 will see the implementation of the first components of the redesigned Special Needs program and the completion of the Child Care Regulations amendments. Both of these will require significant efforts to ensure the child care community and other stakeholders understand the changes and receive the appropriate training to implement those changes.

Financial supports to facilities, caregivers and parents will continue to ensure fundamental needs are met. Consultative supports will focus on quality early childhood education. The Division's communications strategy will focus on early childhood education. The Division will make efforts to link education resources and initiatives with other agency campaigns.

Family and Youth Services Division

Programs and Services

A diverse range of services is provided to the public through the Family and Youth Services Division of the Department. It provides support to at-risk families and youth to prevent further family breakdown; child welfare services to protect children from harm; and community support programs for young offenders as well as custody programs.

The range of services which will be described later in this section will be organized in the continuum of service care they provide, starting from the supportive and developmental, through to intervention and custody. Philosophically, all the programs in this Division are attempting to promote or preserve a healthy, functioning family unit, often in the face of multiple social issues including poverty, alcohol and drug abuse and violence.

The Division offers the following services:

Targeted Community-based Support Services

- Prevention and Support Grants
- Family Violence
- Teen and Young Parent
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

Child Welfare

- Child Protection
- Foster Homes
- Residential Treatment
- Adoption

Youth Services

- Support Program for 16 and 17 Year Olds
- Children and Youth Abused through Prostitution
- Young Offenders
  - Alternative Measures
  - Community Young Offender Service Options
  - Intensive Case Management/ Family Preservation
  - Judicial Interim Release
  - Custody

Because of the diversity within this Division, Key Trends and Plans for 1999-2000 will be discussed in each program area, rather than in one section for the Division as a whole.

Objectives of Division

The objective of the Family and Youth Services Division is to promote and support the well-being of at-risk Saskatchewan children, youth and families by:

- providing or facilitating developmental and support services which include, but are not limited to, support to teen and young parents, and parenting education programs;
- providing for counselling and related assistance to victims of sexual assault and family violence;
- providing assistance and support to children and youth in need of protection;
- providing family support, child placement, or young offender services;
- working with youth in conflict with the law in ways that hold them accountable for their unlawful behavior, reduce the likelihood they will re-offend, and protect the public.

Budget and Staffing

The total budget for Family and Youth Services in 1998-1999 was $87,608,160. Of this amount, $31,520,000 went to pay for services the Division provided directly to clients (e.g. foster care.) The Division dedicated an additional $16,156,000 to purchase services on behalf of clients through community-based organizations. The balance, $37,769,160 was dedicated to the direct delivery of mandated services (e.g. Young Offender facilities.)

Family and Youth Services staffing consists of 981.7 full-time equivalents in regional and central work locations.

Thirty-nine central office staff are responsible for the development of programs, policies, accountability, technical support and legislation and support regional service delivery.

Family and Youth Services	1998-1999 Budget	Delivery
Facilities for Children	$19,387,000	Regional/Central
Family and Youth Community Services	31,520,000	Regional
Family and Youth CBO Services	16,156,000	Regional
Regional Service Centres	18,382,160	Regional
Administration	2,163,000	Central
Totals	$87,608,160	

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Administration	2,163,000	Central
Totals	**$87,608,160**	

Service delivery is augmented by community-based organizations, Indian Child and Family Services agencies, and prevention and support grants to community groups.

The Department provides grants and purchases services from approximately 110 community-based organizations that complement and supplement Department services. Services range from crisis and after-hour services, to family and youth group homes, teen parent services, family support services, counselling, prevention services and residential crisis. These activities require a budget of $16,156,000.

Services to First Nations and the Métis Nation

Since 1993, Saskatchewan Social Services has been working closely with First Nations as they develop child and family service's agencies. By the end of 1998-1999, there were 13 agencies operating in the province providing a full range of child and family services to 49 Bands throughout the province. The agencies have full authority to provide all the services outlined in *The Child and Family Services Act* for their Band members living in those communities.

The agencies provide family support services, planning and placement services for children in care, as well as child protection services for reserve communities. The agencies are closely consulted in case planning for Band members living off-reserve, as well as in the process of reconnecting children in care with First Nations communities and families. Family and Youth is involved with First Nations in the design and direction of young offender community and custody programs.

Of equal importance is the design and direction of services to persons living off-reserve and to Métis people. There have been several projects developed with First Nations and Métis in off-reserve settings, primarily in community development and preventive family services or youth services programs.

Key Trends, Services to First Nations and the Métis Nation

The over-representation of First Nations and Métis people in the Department's programs continues. Fifty-seven per cent of the children in care are First Nation and another 10 per cent are Métis. Seventy-three per cent of the children in custody young offender programs are First Nations or Métis. First Nations and Métis children come into care more often than their non-Aboriginal counterparts and they stay in care longer.

Plans for 1999-2000

Developmental work will continue in the First Nations Child and Family Service's agencies, as well as the facilitation of social development structures by the First Nations in urban centres and northern communities. Social development will focus on preventive family and youth services, partnerships with First Nations for the design and long term direction of young offender community and custody programs, and continuation of employment equity hiring and retention in the Department.

Targeted Community-based Support Services

There is a growing recognition that prevention is the most effective approach in addressing the complex issues facing families. The current prevention approaches in the Division are linked to key government human services including Saskatchewan's Action Plan for Children, Family Violence Strategy and Teen and Young Parent Program.

Prevention and Support Grants

Prevention and Support Grants are part of Saskatchewan's Action Plan for Children. The grants go to community-based services which support vulnerable children, youth and families.

In 1998-1999, 79 projects received funding for social, recreational, cultural, educational or wellness activities. As one of the four departments pooling funds for the program, Social Services contributed funding for 40 of these projects (65 per cent were newly funded initiatives, 35 per cent were funded in the previous year) where the focus was family violence prevention or other prevention services. Social Services' contribution is $750,000 out of a $1.4 million budget.

Parenting Education

Parenting Education Saskatchewan, administered through Family Service Saskatchewan, provides information, support and consultation about parenting education to community members and groups. The project was jointly funded through the Departments of Health and Social Services. Social Services' contribution is $18,000.

Teen and Young Parent Program

The Teen and Young Parent program offers early childhood intervention to at-risk families with children up to five years of age. Services are provided by 18 Department staff and 13 community-based organizations. Participation in the program is voluntary. Activities involved in the program include:

- pregnancy counselling;
- assessing parenting capacity and providing support to parents with young children;
- life-skills management including counselling support to develop problem-solving skills, self-esteem and peer/family support;
- education and vocational counselling;
- emphasis on healthy child development and accessing resources to ensure optimal child development;
- adoption planning, placement services and post-placement support.

The Department provides services to about 400 teen and young parents at any given time. In 1998-1999, the program has been exploring more integrated approaches and more co-ordinated services to better meet the needs of teen and young parents. Increased emphasis has also been placed on engaging birth fathers in the adoption planning and parenting process.

Family Violence

Victims of family violence in Saskatchewan have a number of services available to assist them in leaving abusive relationships or in dealing with sexual assaults.

Ten women's shelters are funded to provide emergency safe housing for women and children leaving an abusive relationship. These shelters are located in Moose Jaw, Swift Current, North Battleford, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, La Ronge, Yorkton and at three Regina locations. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada funds shelters in Meadow Lake and Fort Qu'Appelle.

The North East Crisis Centre in Hudson Bay and the West Central Crisis Centre in Kindersley have developed safe homes. These homes provide short-term accommodation until a woman can decide her next step or can relocate to a women's shelter.

Outreach services funded through the Department assist victims who may not use a shelter or who need help in accessing a shelter or other services. Outreach workers also provide public education on abuse and services available in the local community. An evaluation of the Saskatchewan program models occurred in late 1997-1998 through funding available from Health Canada. The final report was completed in 1998.

Nine sexual assault counsellors operating throughout the province, provide crisis counselling and referrals for women who have been sexually assaulted.

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

Children and youth with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) have significant neurological damage resulting in cognitive and behavior difficulties.

An interprovincial initiative involving Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba was announced in Calgary in October 1998. Each province will take a lead role in a specific project related to FAS. All three provinces will share the material developed:

- Manitoba will develop a FAS remote diagnostic model;
- Alberta will develop clinical practice guidelines for physicians;
- Saskatchewan will develop training with emphasis in the area of young offender facility workers.

Saskatchewan did not have FAS training for child welfare workers. Thus, in conjunction with developing training for youth workers, training was developed and implemented for child welfare workers.

Child Welfare

Child Protection

Child protection services promote the safety and well-being of children. It is recognized that to ensure the protection of children, not all families can be kept together. However, wherever possible, the Department attempts to resolve child safety concerns and develop healthier family environments by providing support services.

The Division's child welfare philosophy is set out within *The Child and Family Services Act* and is based on the Family Centred Case Management approach. This approach uses a thorough family assessment to identify risks to the child's safety and establish clear goals with definite time frames for developing a safe environment for the child.

Regional child protection staff investigate reports of child abuse, neglect or serious conflict between parents and children, under the authority of *The Child and Family Services Act*.

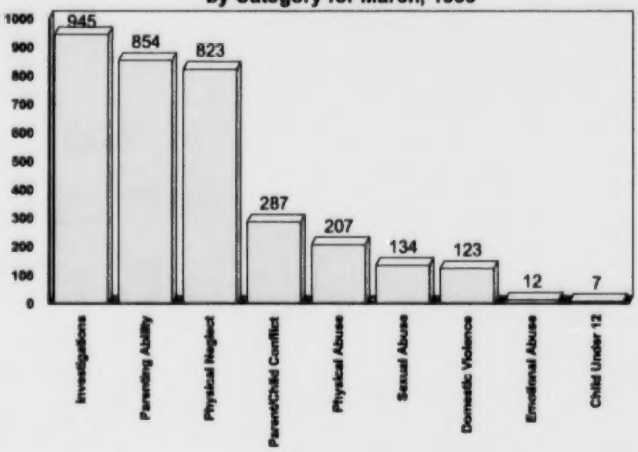
In Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert, emergency services are provided after regular business hours by mobile crisis response agencies in the community. In most other areas, this service is provided by Departmental staff and the RCMP.

Investigations of child physical and sexual abuse are co-ordinated with local police. The Provincial Child Abuse Protocol describes the roles and responsibilities of the professionals who are involved in these investigations.

In 1998, Preparation for Practice training began across the province. This is a comprehensive training package designed to provide new staff in child welfare with basic knowledge and skills.

During 1998-1999, 5,343 cases were referred to the Division for follow-up of child protection concerns. As of March 31, 1999, there were 3,392 families receiving child protection services.

Child Protection Cases by Category for March, 1999



Physical neglect and lack of parenting ability are the most frequent causes of child protection involvement. Services to support families to prevent out-of-home placements are provided where it is safe for the child to remain at home or when such services would facilitate the child's return home. The primary service is in-home support provided through community-based agencies. There is an array of services that families can receive; from in-home parenting help, to support from elders, to services that promote child development. In 1998-99, the budget to provide such services was $3.43 million.

Case Example: Family-Centred in-Home Support

Cheryl, a 20-year-old mother and her two-year-old daughter became involved with the Department of Social Services after Cheryl's aunt and uncle called the Intake Unit. They were worried Cheryl was hitting her child. Cheryl had just begun living independently from her parents, and her aunt and uncle were afraid she was unable to cope. The Family Services worker was seriously considering apprehending the child. A Family Builder's therapist became involved with Cheryl, and was in the home for two to three hours a day, four to five days a week for seven weeks. She praised Cheryl for the things she was doing right and for taking the initiative to live on her own. She helped Cheryl develop a family vision for herself and her daughter, and then taught her the skills she needed to make her vision a reality. The worker taught Cheryl about child development, budgeting and stress-management skills. She taught Cheryl parenting skills to deal with an active child by explaining, then modelling the skills, and prompted Cheryl to use her new skills. Prior to terminating her involvement, the therapist helped Cheryl get involved in neighborhood programs and ensured she was working with a mental health therapist to resolve personal issues.

Cheryl's child protection file will remain open for a short time to ensure she continues to follow through with the changes. The intensive work she was able to do with the Family Builder's therapist enhanced her growth, both as a young woman and as a young mother.

Foster Care

Children come into care under the authority of *The Child and Family Services Act* either through a voluntary agreement between the Department and the parents, or by an order of the Court. Support services are then provided to the child's family so the child can eventually return home.

Until it is safe for the child to return home, Social Services provides a foster home or other residential placement that will best meet the needs of the child. Wherever possible, placements with extended family or within the child's cultural community are sought first in order to maintain family and cultural connections. Some children may be placed in a group home or residential treatment setting, depending on their needs.

When children are not able to return to their home they may be committed to the care of the Minister on a long-term care or permanent ward basis. The goal for these children is to quickly develop a case plan that will meet their needs for security and continuity of care.

Foster care is provided by families in the community. Foster families must successfully complete a thorough home review. Once approved, foster families must complete 40 hours of training related to the special needs of children in-care and their families. Foster families come from all walks of life, and a variety of cultural, educational and economic backgrounds.

As of March 31, 1999, there were approximately 842 foster families in the province. There are four types of foster homes:

- Emergency Foster Homes are families who are prepared to accept children on short notice until another foster family placement can be found that more closely matches the child's needs;
- Short-term Foster Homes are families who are prepared to accept children who will be in care briefly until the child can be returned to their family or extended family;
- Long-term Foster Homes are families who open their homes to a child who is not likely to reunite with their immediate or extended family or who require extended care. For some children this may require care until they are ready for independent living;
- Therapeutic Foster Homes are families who provide intensive guidance, assistance and intervention for children with high behavioral, social, developmental and emotional needs.

During 1998-1999 the Department made several changes as a result of the Children's Advocate's Report on the death of Karen Quill, a 20 month-old child who died while in foster care. The Division began to respond to this Report in the following ways:

- implemented an automated system to review and approve exceptions to the maximum number of children in a foster home;
- updated policies including maximum number of children in foster care, approval of foster homes, contact standards for children in foster care;
- introduced a new policy to provide respite of up to five days for all foster families;
- developed a foster home recruitment and retention strategy.

Over the last year there has been increased emphasis and support to children in foster home care. This has resulted in an increased cost per case of four per cent to $26.57 per day. It is anticipated that with the continued emphasis in these areas that the cost per case will continue to increase over the next year.

While there was a slight increase in the number of foster homes from 829 to 842, there continues to be a shortage of homes in some areas of the province and for some children with special needs. This has resulted in a need for some homes to exceed the maximum number of children normally approved for the home.

Extended family placements have been growing steadily over the past few years. While numbers are still relatively small (slightly over 400), they have nearly doubled in the last two years.

As of March 31, 1999, there were 2,710 children in the care of the Minister. Approximately 60 per cent of the children were in short-term care, with about 40 per cent of these in care through a voluntary agreement with the parents.

M121

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Children in Care - March 31, 1999

Apprehended: Matter before court	791
Section 9: voluntary agreement with parents for care	727
Temporary Wards: committed to care for six months or less - Section 37(1)c	162
Permanent Wards: committed to care until age of majority	510
Long-term Care Orders: same as Permanent Ward but not available for adoption	446
Section 56: agreement for service for previous ward 18 to 21 years of age, so that education may continue	74
Provincial Total	2,710

The majority of children remain in care for brief periods of time before returning to their immediate or extended family or cultural community. Over 80 per cent of children leave care within one year of entering. The majority of these children leave care within six months.

Unfortunately some children are unable to return to their families. In these circumstances the child may be permanently committed to the Minister through voluntary commital or court order. If by reason of age of the child or other circumstances, it is unlikely that an adoption plan would be made if the child were permanently committed to the Minister, the court may make an order that the child be placed in the custody of the Minister until the child attains the age of 18 years. Youth who are in the Minister's care under the above and who reach the age of 18 may enter into an agreement where the Minister may continue to extend support in order for the young persons to continue their education up to age 21. Wards in permanent or long-term care or who are receiving extended support represent about 40 per cent of the total number of children in care.

Only a small number of children become permanent or long-term wards during a year. An equally small number of these wards leave care. Adoption or reunification with family is not possible for most of these children. Therefore, many remain in care until they reach the age of majority and can be helped into independent living arrangements.

Plans for 1999-2000

- Develop public awareness materials for foster care which will particularly help to recruit permanent and long-term care.
- Develop extended family care to advance development of a kinship care program.
- Rewrite the Department's Children's Services manual to provide better policy and practice guidance consistent with the current direction in child welfare.

Residential Private Treatment

Children and youth who have histories of severe neglect, abuse and victimization may require highly specialized residential care and treatment services.

The 1998-1999 budget provided a $650,000 increase for residential private treatment services for troubled children and youth at Ranch Ehrlo. The increase resulted in an additional eight annualized spaces being provided, to a total of 36 youth.

Adoption

Adoption is one of the cornerstones in the child welfare system's response to permanency planning for those children left in the Department's care. Adoption establishes a legal family relationship between adoptive parents and the child.

Adoption services are provided under the authority of *The Adoption Act*. Primary goals of the adoption program are to:

- maintain a sufficient pool of approved adoptive families for children who are voluntarily committed or become permanent wards of the Minister of Social Services for the purpose of adoption placement;
- facilitate the adoptions of children with special needs through expedited placement and assisted adoption;
- regulate international adoptions in accordance with The Hague Convention;
- monitor adoption applications under *The Adoption Act* to ensure that the best interests of children and the rights of all parties to adoption are taken into account.

1998 - 1999 Adoptions Finalized

Type	Number
Domestic Adoption	41
Stepparent Adoption	101
Independent Adoption	46
Agency Adoption	15
Adult Adoption	4
Intercountry Adoption	6
Total	**213**
Assisted Adoption Cases in Active Pay	125

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During 1998-1999 a number of activities enhanced adoption services including:

- amendments to *The Adoption Act* which require residents to apply to Social Services for approval of an international child adoption. A written report supporting the adoption plan is required;
- further amendments to *The Adoption Act* which expand the definition of birth father, includes the majority of them in the adoption process, and ensures that birth fathers' rights are protected and that the child has access to the family background. In addition, the amendments support the rights of birth parents to counselling prior to signing consents for adoption, and deny an access order following an adoption order.

During 1998-1999, the post-adoption program arranged 178 reunions between adopted adults and their birth families, in addition to filling many requests for non-identifying information.

Key Trends

The majority of birth parents participate in the adoption process (e.g., selection of adoptive home, negotiating terms of future communications, increased acceptance of openness in adoption by birth parents and adoptive parents). Of the approved adoptive homes, 92 of 112 are accepting of complete openness and communication with the parents of the infants they wish to adopt.

There is increasing involvement of birth fathers in adoption planning. This directly relates to initiatives and societal shifts which focus on inclusion and general rights of the child.

There is a decrease in the number of applicants for the domestic adoption program, in part due to expanded options, (e.g., agencies, independent, intercountry adoption and use of such self-help and networking tools as the Internet, adoption publications, etc.). The average waiting period is five to eight years.

Youth Services

Support Program for 16 and 17 Year Old Youth

This program combines youth support and income security services for young people. It is intended to provide support for the youth and their family with two objectives:

- prevent involvement as a young offender; and
- prevent involvement in Income Security as an adult.

Only youth who are not able to live at home because of family breakdown, rejection or abuse may receive financial support. Where safety is not an issue, family mediation and other program supports help youth and families to reconcile.

Case plans, developed by youth with the help of staff, are designed to hold youth accountable and have them return home or achieve independence through participation in educational or vocational training or employment.

The support services to the 16 and 17 Year Olds Program was implemented in 1995-1996. Although it is relatively new, policy and program development is now complete as evidenced by the Children's Advocate and Ombudsman. The Children's Advocate and Ombudsman report that there are now few cases being brought to their attention and of those they do see, solutions are more readily found. They have noted that policies are more consistently applied across the province.

Key Trends

Developments in the program include a number of positive features. Mediation services were provided to 106 youth and their families to address issues leading to their returning to, or remaining at home. The average mediation provided was five, two-hour sessions. Of new requests for assistance each month, only 24 per cent actually received benefits in 1998-1999. This statistic has remained relatively consistent since the program began. As expected, social assistance cases for this age group have declined whereas cases in this program have increased. The overall total number of 16 and 17 year old youth involved with Social Services has declined since the inception of this program. Cost per case has remained consistent. Workers now are able to offer a more supportive approach with these youth and their families.

Plans for 1999-2000

Program standards will be completed by the end of the calendar year. Program standards ensure consistent case work practices across the province and are more specific than policy and procedure guidelines. Another 16/17-Year-Old provincial conference is scheduled for late October 1999.

Children and Youth Abused through Prostitution

In 1997, Saskatchewan introduced a five point strategy to combat the sexual exploitation of youth through prostitution. In 1998-1999, as part of an interdepartmental initiative, Social Services played a key role in meeting the following strategic objectives:

- developing a public information campaign communicating that involvement with children and youth prostitution is child abuse;
- establishing outreach services through existing community agencies to connect with and serve children involved in prostitution;
- creating a tracking and monitoring system to detect and prosecute perpetrators and to facilitate services to victims within Saskatchewan and across Canada;
- developing stricter law enforcement policies aimed at pimps, persons who have sex with children and others who exploit children involved in prostitution;
- reviewing existing provincial and federal laws to ensure they do not create unreasonable barriers to the prosecution of pimps and persons who have sex with children.

In March 1999, amendments to *The Child and Family Services Act* were introduced to address the problems of the sexual abuse of children and youth through prostitution.

Funding of $500,000 was provided in Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert for outreach services aimed at children and youth involved in prostitution.

Case Example

Carla (not her real name) is a 17-year-old female. Prior to Youth Services involvement, Carla's family had been involved with the Department on two previous occasions.

The major issue in the home was Carla's "out of control behavior" and her inability to follow directions. The mother indicated Carla was physically aggressive during arguments and felt her behaviors were worsening as time progressed.

Carla's father's home also was not an option. Although she had lived with him previously, Carla would not follow any rules, would steal and lie.

Carla began residing with a school friend and her mother. She attended a school program for significantly challenged students. Her IQ is about 80. Although Carla's attendance was fairly acceptable and her marks were good, she was expelled on the grounds that school personnel were not trained to deal with her emotional difficulties. Carla's room and board placement eventually broke down because of her threatening and abusive tendencies.

With support from her 16 and 17 year old support services worker, Carla located a maternal aunt who was willing to take her in as a room and board placement only with the support of the program. Carla was quite happy to have family back in her life, especially one that cared for her well-being. It wasn't long before Carla's behavior stabilized and she began to feel at home living with her aunt.

Shortly after her placement Carla was reintegrated into the regular school system. She also began seeing a private counsellor, contracted through the Department, on a regular basis. Mediation was offered to both Carla and her parents. However at the time neither were interested.

When Carla turned 18, she and her aunt sent a card of thanks to the support services worker for all her help in bringing the two family members together and for her continued support in finding appropriate resources for Carla.

Plans for 1999-2000

The Department will support the Western Canadian Symposium on Sexual Exploitation of Children through Prostitution. It also plans to work closely with Saskatchewan Justice and police forces in Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert to develop policies on policing and enforcing the new legislation.

Young Offender Services

Services are provided under a youth model for youth in conflict with the law. This model acknowledges that youth are still facing developmental challenges and are therefore different from adult offenders.

The youth model places primary value on public protection and states this is best achieved through:

- holding offenders accountable;
- supporting the participation of their parents;
- developing culturally-sensitive case plans;
- providing treatment based on individualized risk/need assessments;
- building on skills and talents that will help youth to move to responsible adulthood.

Services provided in the youth justice system are consistent with the *Young Offenders Act* (Canada) and include alternative measures and probation for non-violent youth who have had little involvement in the justice system. Community-based intensive supervision programs and custody are intended for the minority of offending youth who are violent and/or have serious repeat offending behaviors.

Young Offenders Services Continuum

Alternatives to Court	Community Options	Custody Options
Alternative Measures	Judicial Interim Release	Community Homes
	Fines, Community and Personal Service, Victim Compensation	Open Custody
	Supervised Probation	Remand
	Day Programs	Secure Custody
	Intensive Supervision	
	Family Preservation	
	Community Homes	

Young Offenders: Alternative Measures

Alternative Measures provides a way for youth involved in summary offences to deal with them outside the formal justice system. This is a preferable option for those youth who accept responsibility for their actions. The process involves a range of services which include formal cautioning, mediation and family group conferencing. The victim is able to participate in the process with apologies, restitution and healing as possible outcomes. The offender is connected in a tangible way to the offence and the victim, thereby having a significant impact on the future incidence of offending.

Alternative Measures are delivered by community-based organizations (First Nations, Métis, and private agencies), service providers, community justice committees and Social Services employees.

The activity within this program area is tracked on a monthly basis which reflects the volume, level of intervention and offence detail.

The volume of referrals to the Alternative Measures Program this year throughout the province reached an all-time high of 2,647 cases. Increased awareness and education led to increasing number of cases. Research demonstrates that Alternative Measures reduces recidivism.

The referral process throughout the province is being streamlined. Alternative Measures Co-ordinators have been recruited in Prince Albert, North Battleford, Meadow Lake, and Buffalo Narrows. In Regina and Saskatoon, co-ordination is handled by a committee of participating organizations which provides a vital link to the other formal justice stakeholders.

Successful as Alternative Measures have been, the program faces a number of challenges in the future, specifically:

- as services are developed they need to be accessible in all areas of the province;
- as new services come on stream, their adherence to standards is essential;
- training of service providers, the police and Crown prosecutors in the delivery of Alternative Measures is being pursued;
- supportive follow-up services that assist the offender to address behavioral problems need to be more available.

Key Trends

- $500,000 was allocated in 1998-1999 for the delivery of enhanced Alternative Measures. This includes Family Group Conferencing.
- First Nations' organizations are participating in the delivery of this program. Most youth are First Nations; some are repeat offenders. Every effort is made to deliver service which is culturally appropriate. Youth participating in the Alternative Measures Program are more accountable to the community. If they choose, victims become directly involved and are able to determine restitution and outcomes.
- The increase in referrals reflects the number of new organizations involved in providing Alternative Measures.

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- The increase in referrals reflects the number of new organizations involved in providing Alternative Measures.

Plans for 1999-2000

- Additional funds will be provided in the 1999-2000 fiscal year to further program development.
- The *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (Canada), when proclaimed by the Federal Government, sets the stage for an increased number of cases through Alternative Measures and will place demands on the existing system. Federal funding to support this policy direction is required to assist in further development. A provincial analysis on the breakdown of charges and volume will occur to determine the capacity of the existing system to deal with the level of new services required.

Young Offenders: Community Service Options

The majority of young persons charged and sentenced serve their dispositions while remaining in the community. Probation orders require youth to report to a youth worker and follow specified conditions. Youth workers monitor and assist these young people to complete their community dispositions which may include such conditions as restitution, community service or fines. There may be other conditions involving school attendance or treatment.

Youth faced with more chronic and serious offences can still be dealt with in the community by an increased level of supervision through programs such as Intensive Supervision, Intensive Case Management, Family Preservation, and Judicial Interim Release (JIR). These programs provide an intensive service to either reintegrate youth into the community or prevent custody for at-risk youth.

The JIR program is available to those youth who have been charged with an offense but are not held in custody until their next court appearance. If the court is concerned that certain youth may re-offend while awaiting their next appearance or may fail to appear, the judge can release them to the community under certain conditions that are supervised by community youth workers employed by Social Services.

Remand pressures were addressed in the centres of Saskatoon and Regina by the temporary recruitment of two additional JIR workers in Saskatoon and one additional JIR worker in Regina.

In the community, Young Offender programs face two major challenges:

- a reasonable balance must be maintained between work associated with the preparation of reports to the court and work associated with youth and their families to address problem behaviors;
- the Intensive Case Management program to manage chronic and potentially violent youth in the community has demonstrated success (from March 1998 to March 1999, the total estimated custody beds saved in this program rose by 15.) However, it needs to be expanded and refined to maximize its effectiveness.

Intensive Case Management services are provided to high risk youth as part of a community sentence or as a follow-up to selected youth leaving custody. Some youth remain with or return to their families and Intensive Case Management workers provide supports to the youth and their family on a 24 hour basis. For youth who are not able to return to their families, they are assisted to find a stable place to live, are linked to school, employment, recreational and cultural opportunities and supported to receive treatment for drug/alcohol related problems. The goal of the Intensive Case Management Program is to stop re-offending behavior by providing high risk youth with rehabilitative supports that will stabilize them in the community.

Key Trends

In 1998-1999, the number of active community clients was 2,623 cases, an increase of 156 cases over the previous year.

In 1998-1999 the Intensive Case Management and Family Preservation Program in the Prince Albert and Saskatoon areas began offering summer day programs for high-risk youth. Regina has provided this service for the past three years. Youth who typically would be faced with custody, have been maintained within the community. As well, three First Nations' cultural camps were funded in the year.

Young Offenders: Custody Options

The provisions of the *Young Offenders Act* (Canada), provide that youth may be sentenced to a period of open or secure custody, or detained in remand while awaiting a court hearing. Remand is provided as part of the secure custody program.

Secure Custody

The Secure Custody Program provides a residential option to the Youth Court when it is determined that a youth presents a significant risk to the safety of the community and should have his or her access to the community restricted or removed for a period of time.

Youth who receive a secure custody disposition have limited opportunity to take part in activities in the community. They must earn the privilege of going on outings and when they do go, they are closely supervised. Education, job training, counselling and guidance are provided within the facility.

Custody facilities work with residents to address their developmental needs as growing teenagers, and any special needs relating to the nature of their offending behavior. In keeping with the requirements of the *Young Offenders Act* (Canada), all programming is conducted with the purpose of preparing each youth for their return to the community.

The Secure Custody Program is comprised of three major facilities (Paul Dojack Youth Centre in Regina, Kilburn Hall Youth Centre in Saskatoon, and the North Battleford Youth Centre) as well as four satellite contingency programs. They are designed to contain young persons within a supportive, developmental, closely supervised and controlled environment. Programs and activities for youth take place within the facility except in occasional circumstances where external programs, such as treatment, may be accessed in the community.

By the beginning of 1998-1999, contingency sites were in place at Echo Valley Youth Camp, Nisbet Youth Centre and NorSask (Prince Albert), and Orcadia Youth Camp (Yorkton). During 1998-1999, a new permanent unit (28 beds) was added to the Paul Dojack Youth Centre.

Open Custody

Open custody is used when the Youth Court Judge decides the youth presents little risk to the safety of the community. The Open Custody Program provides supervised, community-based residential spaces for youth ordered by the Youth Court to a period of open custody. The program consists of several small residential facilities, along with a province-wide network of Community Homes. Youth in open custody are encouraged to attend community schools, obtain employment, receive treatment and take part in recreational activities in the community.

There are 10 open custody facilities in Saskatchewan. Additional spaces were provided through the Community Homes Program. The Community Homes Program is a network of private treatment homes which have been designated as places of open custody. Thirty-eight homes are located in cities, six on farms, seven on-reserve and five in towns.

In the Open Custody Program, youth live in a supervised, residential environment. While in open custody, they participate in community-based treatment and recreation programs and complete required community-service obligations. They are also encouraged to attend community schools and are provided with help to find local employment.

Overall custody counts (open custody, secure custody, remand) averaged 389, up four per cent from the previous average of 374 in 1997-1998. While open custody counts declined slightly, the demand for spaces in secure custody and remand increased 13 per cent over the previous year.

Youth custody counts have steadily increased from 1992-1993, with the annual increase averaging six per cent over this time period. Commensurate with increased resident levels, operating expenditures for 1998-1999 have increased significantly. Overall custody expenditures rose by $4.5 million to $23 million.

As well, a new 14-space open custody facility in Saskatoon replaced a previous eight-space facility and a temporary contingency open custody program was re-opened in North Battleford in April 1998.

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Open	119	132	140	139	146	140	136
Remand	43	45	57	56	59	70	75
Secure	129	140	153	159	155	173	187
Total	**291**	**317**	**350**	**354**	**360**	**383**	**398**

Development of custody program standards continued throughout the year. At year's end, approximately 25 per cent of the custody policy manual's standards statements and evaluation indicators had been completed. These standards outline measures and performances in delivering the custody program.

Plans for 1999-2000

Secure Custody — opening of a 12-bed unit in the North Battleford Youth Centre, expanding capacity at that facility to 64.

Open Custody — opening of a new Yarrow Youth Farm, replacing the current facility, and increasing bed space by six; opening of a 12-bed contingency unit at Prince Albert Youth Centre; and opening of a 12-bed girl's facility at Duck Lake.

Family Services —In 1998-1999, program and site development for the opening of a 16-bed, government-operated Children's Shelter in Saskatoon, targeted for opening in the spring of 1999 was a major program initiative undertaken by the Department. Intended population is youth in need of protection but not in need of specialized high intensity treatment programming.

Young Offender Facilities

- Paul Dojack Youth Centre, Regina
- North Battleford Youth Centre, North Battleford
- Kilburn Hall, Saskatoon
- Nisbet Youth Centre, Prince Albert
- Orcadia Youth Residence, Yorkton
- Prince Albert Correctional Centre, Unit #4, Prince Albert
- Yarrow Youth Farm, Saskatoon
- Drumming Hill Youth Centre Sweet Grass Reserve, North Battleford
- Kenosee Youth Camp, Carlyle
- Prince Albert Youth Residence, Prince Albert
- Orcadia Youth Residence, Yorkton

	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99
Youth Custody Program Expenditures	$14.9 M	$16.2 M	$16.8 M	$19.1 M	$23 M

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- Orcadia Youth Residence, Yorkton

	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99
Youth Custody Program Expenditures	$14.9 M	$16.2 M	$16.8 M	$19.1 M	$23 M

Support Services

The following services are provided to assist the service divisions. These services include:

- Communications and Public Education
- Research and Evaluation
- Organizational Development and Support
- Community Development
- Corporate Policy Unit
- Technology and Property Management
- Budget and Finance

Communications and Public Education

Services

The Communications and Public Education Branch provides strategic communications planning; public education; media relations; speech, pamphlet and report writing/editing; desktop publishing; and marketing services to the Department.

Objectives

As a support service to the Department, this branch's mandate is to provide communications, marketing, and public education services and support to the Department, to assist it in achieving its strategic directions and program goals.

The branch has the following overall goals:

- provide information to the public, clients, stakeholders and the media;
- assist the Department in its efforts to be accountable to the public and others for its activities and decisions;
- provide quality, effective communications and public education services (such as writing, design and media relations);
- work with community partners in communicating to the public;
- provide effective marketing services so that potential clients (e.g. foster parents) are aware of programs which they may choose to participate in or be eligible for.

Organization

Communications and Public Education has five staff: the Director, a Senior Communications Consultant, Public Education Consultant, Communications Consultant, and a shared Desktop Designer/Officer Manager. Its expenditure for the year was $608,498, of which $335,044 was dedicated to the Building Independence campaign.

Activities

During 1998-1999, the branch activities focused on providing communications and advertising support to the launch of the Building Independence campaign, beginning in July 1998. This was the major priority of the branch and involved a campaign including newspaper, radio and transit advertising, and the printing of brochures and posters, to promote the five programs that constituted Building Independence. Of these programs, full uptake was achieved in the Saskatchewan Child Benefit, Family Health Benefits, Provincial Training Allowance and Youth Futures.

The branch provided communications support to government activities on the issue of youth and children sexually abused through prostitution. The Department tabled and passed amendments to *The Child and Family Services Act* to provide further protection for youth and children abused through prostitution. The branch prepared a special newsletter and co-ordinated a media briefing to help the media and public understand the intent and specifics of the legislation.

Communications co-ordinated the public launch of Social Services funding for the Safe House in Saskatoon, part of the community-based action plan to stop sexual abuse of children through prostitution.

The branch worked in partnership with other government departments to prepare a variety of communications material relating to the Saskatchewan's Action Plan for Children.

It launched a departmental website, providing information on Department programs and access to Department publications.

Media relations continued to be a major ongoing activity of the branch. Major public and media issues of the year included the launch of the Building Independence program, the

Helen Montgomery case and the response to the Children's Advocate's report on the Death of Karen Quill. By far the most dominant media issue affecting the Department this year was the Tyrell Dueck case, which attracted national and international media attention.

Staff in Communications wrote and designed a variety of internal and external publications, and provided speechwriting support to the Minister's office.

Plans for 1999-2000

In the coming year, major activities of the branch will be:

- developing a strategic plan for Communications and Public Education, including mission, mandate, goals and objectives;
- researching public and key stakeholder attitudes and understanding on Social Services issues, as a base for developing future public education programs;
- developing a major communications program in the fall to ensure that families who may qualify for SES are aware that they are eligible for this program;
- assisting in the recruiting of more appropriate foster homes, as part of the Department's response to the Children's Advocate's report on Karen Quill;
- developing a communications plan for the Office of Disability Issues; and
- building public awareness and understanding of departmental programs and services, particularly in the area of youth justice and child welfare.

Research and Evaluation

Services

The Research and Evaluation Branch offers research support, program analysis and evaluation services to all parts of the Department. Maintaining relevant and effective programs requires continual analysis. Who is being served? What are client needs? Are those needs being met? The branch helps to find the answers to these questions so that the Department's major objectives can be realized.

Objectives

The major objectives of the Research and Evaluation Branch are to:

- support the Department policy directions through research of the social and economic environments of the province;
- provide executive management with a base of reliable and current information with which to plan new programs or modify existing programs;
- provide evaluation support for specific activities and projects;
- advance the discussion and understanding of social issues through valid and reliable research and disseminate information to staff.

Organization

The branch is composed of five full-time and two part-time staff members. Research and Evaluation operates on an annual expenditure $375,000.

The Department's Resource Centre is also located within the branch and provides staff with the opportunity to read the latest journals, conduct bibliographic searches, or obtain social work information from the Internet or through inter-library loans.

Activities

- Developing data bases and working with community and Aboriginal agencies to collect information on the use of Alternative Measures for young offenders.
- Developing and administering a pilot survey of older children in care in Regina.
- Developing a framework to evaluate the new Building Independence programs. A research proposal was also prepared to examine the effects of family health benefits for low income families.
- Evaluation of a pilot project in Regina Region to control child protection caseload sizes in selected units.
- Assisting the Income Security Division and the Family and Youth Services Division to conduct operational reviews.
- Developing an environmental scan and demographic analysis for Department planning.
- Analyzing caseload trends in major Department programs over the past six years.
- Co-ordinating the review of social assistance programs in Saskatchewan by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
- Developing options for systematically collecting client assessments of Department programs.

Key Trends

There is increasing emphasis within the Department on accountability and on providing information that evaluates the effectiveness of programs. This emphasis is creating additional demands for program data and analysis. As programs move toward a more evidence-based management approach, the need for reliable program data is increasing.

The 1999 federal/provincial Social Union Agreement obliges social program providers to monitor, measure and report regularly on the effectiveness of their programs. The Research and Evaluation Branch will continue to help define information needs and develop methods for capturing data.

The branch also helps different program areas within the Department to develop outcome measures and indicators of effectiveness. This includes both system measures as well as client feedback measures.

Plans for 1999-2000

Major new areas to which branch resources will be devoted in 1999-2000 are:

- supporting all program areas to develop outcome and performance measures for the services and programs they provide;

- developing survey methodologies for obtaining client feedback;
- evaluating Income Security program changes from the Building Independence initiative;
- development and participation in evaluation of the Building Independence programs offered by other departments (Provincial Training Allowance and the Family Health Benefits Program);
- continuing to work with all areas of the Department to conduct regional reviews of operations.

Organizational Development and Support

Services

The Division provides organizational development and human resource management services to all levels within Social Services. These services include consultation on:

- organizational structures
- human resource management
- labor relations
- human resource issues associated with program development

Objectives

The Division works to develop human resource strategies which assist in maintaining the Department as a preferred employer in the field of social services in Saskatchewan. The objectives to accomplish this include:

- providing strategic human resource management consulting services to assist in the development of accurate human resource plans;
- the development of partnerships to utilize the expertise of staff and management as well as other key partners; and
- the planning of corporate staff development initiatives.

Organization

Staff in the Division act as internal consultants to all facets of human resource management and organizational development. The 1998-1999 operating budget for the Division was $810,590. Salary expenditures for the 11 staff members totalled $533,501 with the additional $277,089 applied to operating expenses.

Divisional staff put considerable effort into the development of partnerships, both within and outside of the Department. Within the Department, the organizational development consultants are assigned various program divisions, regions and facilities. The consultants meet with the management teams on a regular basis in order to discuss and address issues related to organizational development, design, human resource management and labor relations.

Activities

Strategic Human Resource Management Steering Committee

Composed of representatives from Executive Management, this Committee was established during 1998-1999 to:

- provide a long range strategic focus to human resource management issues and priorities in Social Services;
- to ensure that human resource management services and initiatives support the Department's objectives;
- to provide guidance, advice and support on corporate human resource initiatives, policies and priorities;
- to review, discuss and prioritize human resource initiatives.

Based upon feedback and direction received from the Steering Committee staff development and training initiatives have been developed to address departmental needs. An example includes the recognition of need for a training and development strategy to ensure staff receive the training they require to provide enhanced service to clients.

To accomplish this the Division partnered with the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) to conduct a training needs-analysis. SIAST will make recommendations to the Department on delivery approaches and further partnership strategies to developing learning resources. Training activities also occur throughout the program areas such as Income Security and Family and Youth Services.

Occupational Health and Safety Council

The Division has provided support throughout the year to the Occupational Health and Safety Council and the local committees. The initiatives undertaken this year include:

- local protocols on violence in the work place were developed for all offices and training was delivered to all employees;
- policy development on immunization against specific communicable diseases; and
- workstation inspections have been undertaken in most areas throughout the province with ergonomic enhancements provided where necessary.

M121

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Employment Equity Council

The division has provided support throughout the year to the department-wide Employment Equity Council. The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission has established employment targets for various designated groups, such as Aboriginals, women and persons with disabilities.

Plans for 1999-2000

Organizational Development and Support will continue to work with our key partners in the human resource area (staff, managers, CUPE local 600 and the Saskatchewan Government Employees Union) to foster a positive climate that will provide the highest level of client service possible. While work will continue with groups like the Department Employment Equity Council and the Department Occupational Health and Safety Council, there are key activities planned for the other areas during the 1999-2000 fiscal year. These include:

Human Resource Planning

Over the course of the next year, Organizational Development will be working with selected areas to develop integrated human resource plans. These plans will look at all areas of the human resource needs and include:

- training and development needs;
- succession planning.
- recruitment and retention.

Supervisory Learning

Supervisors have identified certain supports that they require to allow them to do their job in a more efficient manner. These include:

- providing opportunities to meet and discuss best practices, share experiences, and clarify program standards/expectations that allows new supervisors to learn from experienced, effective supervisors;
- increasing their knowledge in such areas as coaching, staffing, contract knowledge, performance improvement and discipline; and
- developing team-building skills to assist supervisors in building skills and expertise within their work units.

Equity Conference

The department-wide Employment Equity Committee is planning a conference of the Co-Chairs of all of the Employment Equity Committees in the fall of 1999. A major emphasis of this conference will be to raise the issues of persons with disabilities in order to increase the number of target group members in this area.

Designated Group	Number of Permanent Positions	Target	Current Designated Group Employees
Women			
- Management	131	59	60
- Non-traditional	1,061	477	441
Aboriginal Ancestry	2,896	353	405
Persons with Disabilities	2,896	281	84
Visible Minority	2,896	156	118

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Community Development Unit

Services

Community development is about people taking charge of their own futures. It emphasizes building community capacity by identifying needs and becoming involved in determining appropriate solutions. Community Development places particular emphasis on prevention, children and families, integration and culturally-appropriate services.

Objectives

The objectives of the unit are to provide training, leadership, planning and support in community development, within the Department and communities.

Organization

This Unit operates from Saskatoon with three staff. The budget allocation is $205,390.

Activities

Training

In co-operation with the Social Service's regions, Community Development organized a Community Development Institute in Regina. The conference focused on community economic development and small business creation as a vehicle for building social capital and providing employment opportunities to low income people.
The Unit delivered a number of workshops to Social Services staff and community groups. Examples of the workshops include: board development; leadership and decision-making; strategic planning; and the application of community development to social work.

Leadership and Planning

Community Development played a key role in developing a partnership between the Northern Association of Municipalities (New North) and Social Services to hold the consultations on the Northern Community and Social Development. The final report was completed on February 18, 1999. The final report made specific recommendations to change Social Services' policies and programs. A working group has been set up to review and implement the report's recommendations.

In partnership with Saskatchewan Economic and Co-operative Development, the unit helped develop a policy and program framework for the new Neighborhood Development Organizations (NDO's) in Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert.

Support and Assistance to the Community Development Process

In Prince Albert, the unit helped River Bank Development Corporation develop a strategic vision, hire a manager and create a detailed work plan.

The unit assisted the Network for Co-operative and Community Development in its efforts to establish a Saskatoon-based Community Economic Development (CED) Fund. Such a fund is necessary because community development groups including the Neighborhood Development Organizations, have difficulty accessing capital in the form of equity or low interest loans to pursue CED projects.

Plans for 1999-2000

In 1999-2000, Community Development plans to deliver regional seminars focusing on approaches to prevent at-risk youth from coming into custody, and the application of the unit's principles in working with these young people. The unit will co-ordinate and implement a Community Economic Development Symposium targeted to a rural and northern Saskatchewan audience.

Corporate Policy Unit

Services

Corporate Policy provides analysis and advice to the senior management of the Department on interdepartmental and intergovernmental issues.

The Unit has five core functions:

- representing the Department's interests in the development of national social policy projects and initiatives;
- negotiation, interpretation and claiming functions related to federal-provincial cost sharing agreements;
- working with other departments of government to ensure that policy analysis and new initiatives are developed from a "government-wide" perspective;
- co-ordination and management of issues and briefings including support to the Minister in his capacity as Minister Responsible for Seniors; and
- co-ordinating the Department's legislation planning as well as analysis and response to proposed changes from other departments.

Cost-sharing agreements administered by the Unit include the Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities Agreement and the Young Offenders' Agreement. Also included are charge backs to the federal government for services provided to status Indians.

Objectives

The Corporate Policy Unit strives to strengthen positive working relationships with other governments and with other agencies of the Government of Saskatchewan in order to ensure that the strategic goals of the Department are realized and the most effective use is made of government's resources.

Organization

The unit has a staff of seven and expenditures of $382,597.

Activities

As part of its intergovernmental and interdepartmental responsibilities for 1998-1999, the unit:

- co-ordinated the Department's participation in the July 1998 launch of the National Child Benefit and assisted in planning the next phase of National Child Benefit (NCB) investment;
- provided support to the Deputy Minister as provincial co-chair of the National Children's Agenda (NCA) and participated in the development of public discussion documents;
- co-ordinated Saskatchewan's participation in the development and public release of a national disability vision paper, *In Unison: A Canadian Approach to Disability Issues*;
- supported the interdepartmental task team implementing the Canada/Saskatchewan Agreement on Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD) and co-ordinated Saskatchewan's involvement in the development of an evaluation framework for EAPD;
- assisted with the development of the Office of Disability Issues;
- prepared briefings and presentation materials for seven intergovernmental meetings of Ministers and Deputy Ministers;
- chaired an interdepartmental Task Group on Seniors to co-ordinate policy, program and service issues affecting seniors;
- facilitated the province's participation in the 1999 United Nations International Year of Older Persons (IYOP 1999) including the appointment of the Minister's Provincial Advisory Committee on the IYOP.

Plans for 1999-2000

The Corporate Policy Unit will continue to support the Department's participation in intergovernmental meetings and to manage the Department's cost sharing arrangements with the federal government.

The unit will also promote the Department's interests through its continued work on:

- the National Child Benefit initiative;
- the development of a National Children's Agenda;
- the federal/provincial/territorial *In Unison: A Canadian Approach to Disability Issues* initiative; and
- implementation of the Canada-Saskatchewan Agreement on Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities.

Technology and Property Management

Services

The Division is comprised of three major areas: Information and Technology Services, Property Management and Support Services.

Information and Technology Services include:

- operation of the Department's computer systems;
- support and training of the Automated Client Index (ACI) system and all desktop computer products including Lotus Notes and Lotus SmartSuite;
- operation of a help desk to provide a single point of contact to solve problems;
- maintaining a technical infrastructure that includes the Local and Wide Area Networks (LAN/WAN). These networks connect the Department's offices and facilities with each other, other government departments via the Government Wide E-Mail System (GEMS), and the World Wide Web via the Internet;
- managing and developing new systems' initiatives;
- providing consulting services on technology issues with other divisions and regions; and
- providing ongoing enhancements, maintenance and support for existing business applications.

Property Management is responsible for co-ordinating all capital projects, office space and lease costs, construction, tenant improvements and building-related Occupational Health and Safety issues throughout the regions and for all facilities. These responsibilities extend to 29 regional locations, 18 facilities and 73 day-offices.

Support Services is responsible for managing the services necessary to support the daily operations of the Department. These responsibilities include: managing Freedom of Information requests, providing consultation on records storage, mail and stock room management, managing office furniture and equipment, managing the Department's vehicles and co-ordinating printing and reproduction requirements.

Objectives

The Technology and Property Management Division, along with regional support teams, provide and maintain information technology and physical infrastructures. The Division's initiatives enable Department employees to effectively deliver programs and services to the people of Saskatchewan.

Working in partnership with our stakeholders and service providers, the Division facilitates, trains and delivers support for the daily operational needs of the Department.

In addition, the Division strives to provide planning and development of cost-effective technical and environmental solutions to meet Departmental business needs and strategic objectives.

Organization

The Division operates with a permanent staff of 25 people. Its budget is shown below.

Budget Information

Divisional Salaries	$ 1,308,008
Information and Technology Expenditures	8,328,421
Property Management Annual Accommodation and Lease Costs	10,562,069
Property Management - Young Offender Capital Projects	3,630,964
Support Services Expenditures	2,975,293

Activities

Information Technology

The Division provided technical support for the Saskatchewan Child Benefit and the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement (SCB/SES) programs. Several technological advancements were introduced during the course of this project including a call centre and interactive voice-response system. These and other related advancements are being considered for future projects as a possible means of improving program delivery and dealing with workload issues.

The Family and Youth Automated Payment system was implemented in nine regional offices. The system and support was further enhanced in preparation for provincial implementation.

The Department's Year 2000 Project was managed to ensure there were no interruptions to critical business activities. This included balancing effort and cost against the need to ensure the Department continues to provide services in the year 2000 and beyond.

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The Division continued to strengthen the Department's previous commitment to products such as Lotus Notes and its work group computing capabilities. To this end, a number of database and workflow applications were developed to assist with communications and workload throughout the Department. In addition, dedicated Internet access was provided via the Wide Area Network, and a common set of desktop office automation tools (Lotus SmartSuite) were installed on all desktops.

Property Management

During the year, the Division was involved in the following improvements to the Department's property:

- expansion of the North Battleford Regional Office;
- acquisition of alternate space for Saskatoon 1st Avenue and resolution of space issues with Income Security Division in Saskatoon;
- expansion of the Swift Current Service Centre;
- dormitory renovations at Dales House;
- construction of the new Yarrow/ Children's Shelter; and
- completion of the fourth living unit and security fence at Paul Dojack Youth Centre.

Staff worked extensively with Family and Youth Services to identify and evaluate options to address the needs of young offender facilities.

Plans for 1999-2000

- Evaluate divisional organization and delivery strategies for all areas of the Division.
- Evaluate the feasibility of using the social insurance registration number as a unique client identifier and developing interfaces to the Federal Government Social Insurance Registry System.
- Build on the infrastructure and technology developed for SCB/ SES by expanding the call centre to provide delivery of other Income Security services.
- Conduct security review of information technology practices and procedures.
- Ensure the stability and security of the information technology infrastructure by installing anti-virus and remote support software.
- Address occupational health and safety issues and continue review of other workplace environments.
- Work with Family and Youth Services to implement solutions for young offender capacity issues.
- Assist Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation with a long-term space study of Valley View Centre.
- Ensure the effective completion of all 1999-2000 lease renewals.
- Review the processes used by support services to ensure their effectiveness.

Financial Management

Services

Financial Management Division consists of two branches: Budget Management and Financial Services.

The Budget Management Branch co-ordinates budget development and expenditure tracking for the Department. The Financial Services Branch co-ordinates comprehensive accounting functions for all Department expenditures.

The Budget Management Branch provides prospective financial planning for Department expenditures through the annual budget development and in-year tracking and forecasting of operational expenditures. In this role, the Division is directly connected to the strategic planning process for all Program Divisions and for the Department itself.

The Financial Services Branch performs a controlling function by ensuring Department expenditures are made in a fashion that meets all legislative, regulatory, policy and professional accounting standards. In this role, the branch works with Program Divisions and the Department of Finance, Comptroller Division to balance control requirements and program operational needs.

Objectives

The objectives of Budget Management Branch are:

- to co-ordinate annually the development of a Department budget strategy for consideration by government;
- to co-ordinate the preparation of detailed line item budgets to facilitate monthly tracking and management of expenditures;
- to prepare briefing material that will assist in answering questions during Committee of Finance deliberations in the legislature;
- to establish internal program and departmental financial targets to guide Divisions and the Department in meeting financial planning objectives;
- to track Department cashflows and co-ordinate Interim Supply and Special Warrant funding arrangements as needed; and
- to co-ordinate Departmental accountability and reporting functions that assist in the monitoring and evaluation of program activity.

The objectives of the Financial Services Branch are:

- to ensure that all payments are properly authorized and in accordance with legislation, regulations, Department of Finance policies and Departmental policies;
- to ensure that all payments and revenue are accurately recorded;
- to ensure supplier payments are made on a timely basis;
- to ensure that all Departmental financial systems have appropriate financial controls to safeguard public funds;
- to manage Department payroll processes;
- to manage the Department's imprest accounts and trust accounts;
- to manage community-based organization contracts for the Department including audit policies.

Organization

The Division's total expenditure for 1998-1999 was $1.3 million with a staff complement of 35.

The Budget Management Branch consists of four staff.

The Financial Services Branch is organized into four units.

Expenditure Unit - Processes supplier, foster maintenance and employee payroll. This unit must ensure that payments have appropriate supporting documentation, and are properly authorized. Payments must be correctly recorded so that financial reports provide accurate information for management and for the Public Accounts.

Revenue and Program Support Unit - Records all revenue received by the Department, provides financial services and support to the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan, the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement, the Saskatchewan Child Benefit and Child Benefit

Adjustment programs, monitors all institutional trust accounts, develops and monitors financial controls in departmental revenue and expenditure systems and prepares all financial schedules.

Accounts Receivable Unit - Responsible for the recovery and collection of all debts owed to the Department.

Community-Based Organization Payment Unit - Prepares and monitors financial and administrative policies and procedures required by the Department for community-based organizations that the Department funds as well as processing their payments.

Activities

The development of the annual budget strategy is complicated by changing program demands; and shifting government and public expectations for Social Services' programs. Reshaping Departmental financial plans involves understanding and predicting program activities while examining program effectiveness with a view to meeting government wide planning for social policies.

The bank reconciliation for the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan is complex and involves a large volume of transactions. As a result, some irreconcilable differences have caused the bank reconciliation to go out of balance. This fiscal year a major effort was placed on the bank reconciliation and the differences were resolved.

The financial reporting guide that is provided to community-based organizations details the accounting and financial reporting standards that are required by the Department. This fiscal year, it was updated to conform to recent standards established by the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants for not-for-profit organizations.

Recovery of overpayments of Saskatchewan Assistance Plan recipients who are no longer receiving benefits increased 45 per cent from the previous fiscal year. In 1998-1999 annual recoveries were $831,000 compared to $572,000 in the 1997-1998 fiscal year. Overpayments of assistance from recipients still receiving Saskatchewan Assistance Plan benefits are recovered from their benefits.

The branch provided financial services support to a number of automated payment's systems under development by ensuring they contained appropriate financial controls, producing the payments and dealing with banking issues.

Key Trends

The division participated in the government-wide Performance Management and Accountability Project to review current planning and budgeting systems. The project envisions three primary components:

- the development of a comprehensive planning regime for government and individual departments;
- the development of a performance management system; and
- the development of an enhanced reporting regime for government.

Taken together, these accountability components form the basis of an integrated accountability system. It will be the Department's challenge and goal to ensure planning, evaluation and reporting functions meet the standards of a new integrated system. The Financial Management Division will be a key player in the reshaping of department-wide accountability functions.

The major new benefit programs and payment systems implemented by the Department rely extensively on automated systems for the determination of client benefits and calculation of payments. The previous programs and payments were generally subject to traditional clerical pre-audit processes. The newer programs and systems do not utilize the traditional pre-audit processes and require a different approach.

There is an increased emphasis on accountability and implementation of accounting and reporting standards recommended by the accounting profession. The Government of Saskatchewan has moved away from the modified cash basis of accounting to an accrual accounting basis. The change affects the amounts reported for expenditures in the Department's Income Security programs. The Department is also applying the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants standards for not-for-profit organizations in its financial reporting requirements for community-based organizations that it funds.

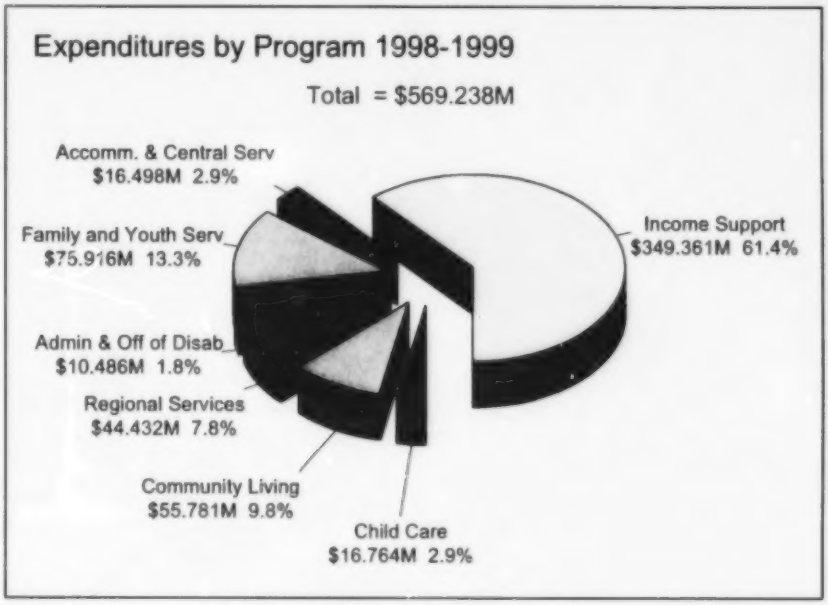
Plans for 1999-2000

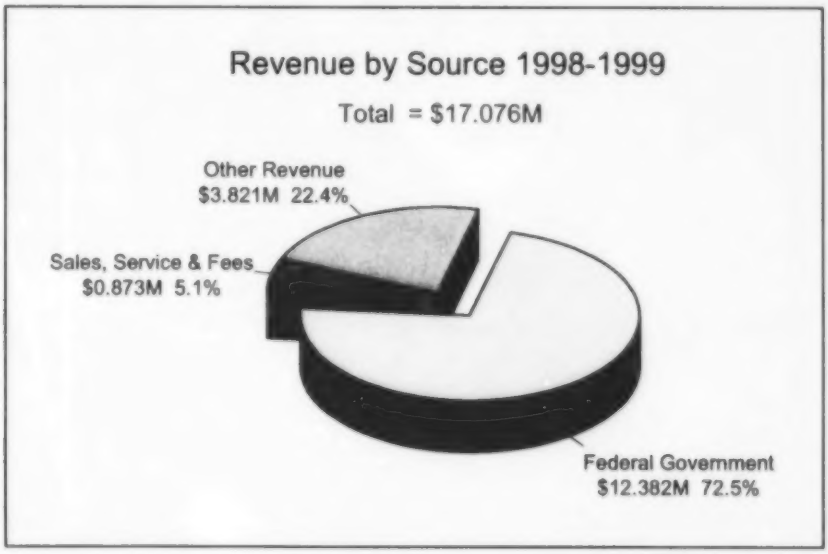
The Department has recently implemented the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement, Saskatchewan Child Benefit and Child Benefit Adjustment as well as an automated payment system in Family and Youth Services. The branch will be establishing an internal audit program for these programs to ensure payments are consistent with program legislation and regulations.

The Department has had one standard form contract that has been in use with community-based organizations for many years. The contract is becoming outdated and does not reflect the many new and different organizational forms and relationships with the Department. Plans are to implement updated contracts in the 1999-2000 fiscal year that reflect these new relationships.

Seminars are planned for community-based organization board members which deal with their role and responsibilities in their contractual relationship with the Department as well as their financial and administrative requirements.

The Accounts Receivable function in the branch is charged with the recovery of debts owed the Department. Over the past several years the amount collected has increased. In the 1999-2000 fiscal year a further increase is expected.





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Expenditure Statement 1998-99

		1998-99		1997-98	Variance to 1998-99 Actual to 1997-98 Actual ($000's)	Notes
		Approved Budget ($000's)	Actual ($000's)	Actual ($000's)		
SS01	**Administration**	**9,300**	**10,379**	**11,477**	**(1,098)**	1.
SS02	**Accommodation & Central Services**					
	- 0017 Capital Operating	3,400	3,631	1,403	2,228	
	- 0057 Payments to SPMC	11,955	12,867	11,842	1,025	
	Total Accommodation & Central Services	**15,355**	**16,498**	**13,245**	**3,253**	2.
SS03	**Income Support**					
	- 0004 Saskatchewan Assistance Plan	248,196	263,024	299,710	(36,686)	
	- 0008 Saskatchewan Income Plan	11,200	12,037	12,329	(292)	
	- 0012 Saskatchewan Child Benefit	49,700	56,526	0	56,526	
	- 0013 Saskatchewan Employment Supplement	13,500	7,427	0	7,427	
	- 0028 Family Income Plan	2,605	2,031	5,444	(3,413)	
	- 0029 Income Security Administration	6,249	6,401	7,407	(1,006)	
	- 0033 Grants for Income Security Programs	1,959	1,915	2,614	(699)	
	Total Income Support	**333,409**	**349,361**	**327,504**	**21,857**	3.
SS04	**Family & Youth Services**					
	- 0005 Family & Youth Community Services	31,520	33,649	30,698	2,951	
	- 0010 Family & Youth NGO Services	16,156	16,415	14,766	1,649	
	- 0011 Family & Youth Administration	2,163	2,731	2,311	420	
	- 0056 Facilities for children & Youth	19,387	23,121	18,703	4,418	
	Total Family & Youth Services	**69,226**	**75,916**	**66,478**	**9,438**	4.
SS05	**Regional Service Centres**	**40,223**	**44,432**	**39,186**	**5,246**	5.
SS06	**Community Living**					
	- 0024 Program Delivery	19,384	20,453	19,102	1,351	
	- 0027 Payments and Grants	35,811	35,328	32,901	2,427	
	Total Community Living	**55,195**	**55,781**	**52,003**	**3,778**	6.
SS07	**Child Care**					
	- 0018 Child Care Facilities	5,212	5,218	4,803	415	
	- 0019 Child Care Facility Capital	1,000	1	994	(994)	
	- 0041 Child Care Parent Subsidies	10,269	9,978	9,963	15	
	- 0051 Child Care Administration	1,433	1,567	1,415	152	
	Total Child Care	**17,914**	**16,764**	**17,175**	**(412)**	7.
SS09	**Office of Disability Issues**	**200**	**107**	**0**	**107**	8.
	Total Social Services Expenditure	**540,822**	**569,238**	**527,068**	**42,170**	

(See following page for notes.)

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	Total Child Care	**17,914**	**16,764**	**17,175**	**(412)**	*7.*
SS09	**Office of Disability Issues**	**200**	**107**	**0**	**107**	*8.*
Total Social Services Expenditure		**540,622**	**569,238**	**527,068**	**42,170**	

(See following page for notes.)

Notes

1. *Re-allocation of actual expense from Administration to appropriate program delivery areas and one-time costs in 1997-1998 for office automation improvement project.*

2. *Construction of Saskatoon Children's Shelter and unit at Paul Dojack Youth Centre.*

3. *Incremental funds provided for two new programs — SCB and SES — the costs of which were partially offset by transfers from SAP, elimination of FIP, and normal caseload reductions in SIP. Administration costs were lower in 1998-1999, as one-time system development costs for SCB and SES were expensed in 1997-1998 and no longer required.*

4. *Increased program activity in Foster Care, Family Support, and Private Treatment. Increased youth resource costs and development of the Prince Albert Grand Council (PAGC) Residential Care resource; support for youth abused through involvement in prostitution; and community services for youth who offend. Additional contingency facility spaces for young offenders and increased staff training expenditures.*

5. *Increased salary and operating costs due to collective agreement settlements and increased staffing for front-line service delivery.*

6. *Salary and non-salary increases to CBO grants, new programs to respond to caseload pressures, and increased salary costs due to collective agreement settlements within government.*

7. *Facility Capital was a one-time $1.0M grant in 1997-1998 with no expenditures in 1998-1999, while the Wage Enhancement grant was increased by $.5M. The remaining expenditure difference resulted from increased salary and operating costs due to collective agreement settlements and increased short-term staffing needs.*

8. *Office of Disability Issues was established in 1998-1999 and was not operational for a full year.*

Revenue Statement 1998-99

	1998-99 Actual ($000's)	1997-98 Actual ($000)
Sales, Services and Service Fees		
- Miscellaneous Medical and Institutional Services	740	664
- Other Miscellaneous Services	73	65
- Miscellaneous Deductions from Staff Salaries	60	65
Total Sales, Services and Service Fees	**873**	**794**
Receipts from Government of Canada		
- Canada Assistance Plan	0	912
- Vocational Rehabilitaiton for Disabled Persons Agreemment	170	1,417
- Employability Assistance	1,326	0
- Young Offenders Agreement	5,808	6,715
- Special Allowance for Children in Care	2,876	1,971
- Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada	1,835	2,481
- Other Federal Contributions	367	0
Total Receipts from Government of Canada	**12,382**	**13,496**
Other Revenue		
- Maintenance Order Revenues	1,586	1,840
- Casual Revenue	567	107
- Unemployment Insurance Assignment Revenue	110	90
- Repayment -- Public Assistance	802	597
- Refunds of Previous years' Expenditures	900	0
- Collection Agency Fees withheld	(144)	(38)
Total Other Revenue	**3,821**	**2,596**
Total Social Services Revenue	**17,076**	**16,886**

Capital Assets

	March 31, 1999			March 31, 1998		
	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value
Property and Equipment						
Vehicles	14,000	11,200	2,800	14,000	8,400	5,600
Machinery and equipment	1,083,698	404,531	679,167	922,560	423,504	499,056
Computer hardware	1,244,467	730,789	513,678	1,786,902	933,062	853,840
Computer software	783,518	434,291	349,227	1,264,329	796,269	468,060
Office equipment	254,794	167,288	87,506	286,653	166,502	120,151
Office furniture	745,575	149,003	596,572	646,380	152,567	493,813
Totals	**4,126,052**	**1,897,102**	**2,228,950**	**4,920,824**	**2,480,304**	**2,440,520**

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Totals	**4,126,052**	**1,897,102**	**2,228,950**	**4,920,824**	**2,480,304**	**2,440,520**

Related Services

The Department and its staff are involved in a number of issues in collaboration with other departments, and the Minister's responsibilities in other areas require the Department to provide support to programs that do not technically fall within its mandate.

The Department houses the Office of Disability Issues, for which the Minister of Social Services is responsible. However, this Office has an impact across government, and so is considered to be outside the direct responsibility of the Department.

The Minister was responsible for Seniors' Issues as well during this year, and while the Department has no seniors' programs outside of SIP, 1999 was the International Year of Older Persons (IYOP), and the Department supported the Minister's Provincial Advisory Committee on the IYOP.

Another key interdepartmental group is the Saskatchewan's Action Plan for Children, which involves eight government departments involved in children's issues, and works in collaboration with community groups across the province. Social Services is the lead agency for this government group.

Office of Disability Issues

Services

The Office of Disability Issues (ODI) is hosted by the Department of Social Services and reports to the Minister Responsible for Disability Issues through the Deputy Minister of Social Services. It serves as a focal point for provincial government initiatives on disability issues. It provides leadership and performs a senior co-ordinating role throughout government in addressing disability issues.

It was established in September 1998.

Objectives

As a new office, much of the first months of its existence was spent on developing its own strategic vision and plan. Since this report is the first time ODI is reporting to the public, its draft Vision, Goals, Objectives, Principles and Plan are supplied in detail.

Vision

Persons with disabilities are valued members of our society, where all people are treated with dignity and respect. Our society recognizes the needs and aspirations of persons with disabilities and together generates opportunities, which enable persons with disabilities to achieve full and equal participation.

Goals

The Office of Disability Issues serves as a focal point for provincial government initiatives on disability issues. It provides leadership and performs a senior co-ordinating role throughout government in addressing disability issues. The Office of Disability Issues provides leadership by increasing the responsiveness of the mainstream service system to the needs of persons with disabilities, while facilitating the development or maintenance of specialized services as needed.

Objectives

The Office of Disability Issues supports government departments and agencies in achieving the following objectives through the development and implementation of a Disability Action Plan.

Full Participation - To remove attitudinal and systemic barriers, and disincentives that impede the full participation of persons with disabilities in the social, economic and cultural life of our province.

Active Participation - To facilitate the active participation of persons with disabilities and the disability community in the review and development of programs, policies and legislation that affect them.

Programs and Services Based on Need - To achieve a comprehensive and integrated array of public policies, programs and services for persons with disabilities that are sensitive and responsive to individual need and that recognize the additional costs of disability.

Principles

The Disability Action Plan incorporates the following principles.

Rights and Responsibilities - Persons with disabilities have the same human rights and the same responsibilities as all Canadians.

Respect and Dignity - Persons with disabilities are individuals and have inherent worth.

Citizenship - Persons with disabilities are participating citizens who make valuable contributions to their communities.

Inclusion - Persons with disabilities have the right to participate without discrimination in the social, economic, and cultural life of society and the right to accommodation in accordance with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and human rights legislation.

Self-determination - Persons with disabilities, as citizens, have the right to equal participation in decisions that affect their well-being or the well-being of their communities.

Autonomy - Persons with disabilities have the right to direct their lives and the right to risk.

Diversity and Culture - Persons with disabilities reflect a rich diversity of abilities, cultures, gender and age.

Safety and Security - Persons with disabilities have the right to safety and security and to live free from violence and victimization.

Strategy

The Office of Disability Issues provides leadership, coordination and facilitation of disability issues. A key function is supporting departments and agencies in establishing and maintaining structures and processes that ensure a coordinated and collaborative approach to disability issues. The Activities section describes how this strategy is to be achieved.

Organization

The office has a staff of four that includes an Executive Co-ordinator, a Senior Policy Advisor, a Research Officer and an Administrative Assistant. The budget allocation was $200,000.

Activities

The Office of Disability Issues, was launched in September 1998 and has developed an approach to address disability issues that crosses all sectors of government and actively involves the community. In 1998-1999, the office developed and chaired the Officials' Steering Committee on Disability Issues of senior government personnel. This committee's mandate is to develop and facilitate the interdepartmental implementation of the Disability Action Plan.

It developed the Saskatchewan Council on Disability Issues whose mandate is to advise the Minister Responsible for Disability Issues and participate in the development of the Disability Action Plan and the Inclusion Lens. This is a voluntary committee representing the community.

The office created task teams whose mandate is to develop program and policy options that address the following issues: Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD), Autism and Abuse of Adults in Vulnerable Circumstances.

It also liaised with government departments and the disability community to improve coordination on disability issues.

In addition, the Office of Disability Issues undertook research and policy activities through the development of an Inclusion Lens to assess the impact of government programs, policies and legislation on persons with disabilities; and development of an inventory of provincial government programs and services for persons with disabilities.

Plans for 1999 - 2000

Disability Action Plan and the Inclusion Lens

- Continue work on the Disability Action Plan document in collaboration with the Saskatchewan Council on Disability Issues, the Officials' Steering Committee on Disability Issues and the disability community.
- Complete the development of the Inclusion Lens and begin the planning for its implementation and evaluation, in partnership with government and community.
- Organize community consultations on the Disability Action Plan and the Inclusion Lens.

- Develop a communications strategy for the Disability Action Plan in collaboration with the Communication and Public Education Branch.

Task Teams

- Employability Assistance for Persons with Disabilities (EAPD) Task Team - continue to assist with the development of the multi-year strategy under the new Employability Assistance for Persons with Disabilities (EAPD) Agreement.
- Autism Task Team - continue to chair the task team and assist with the development of program and policy options that respond to a government/community report on services to people with autism.
- Abuse of Adults in Vulnerable Circumstances Task Team - work with the Department of Justice and assist with the follow up on the recommendations of a government/community report on the abuse of vulnerable adults in vulnerable circumstances.

Other Activities

- Develop an educational strategy targeted to government departments regarding their obligations under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and human rights legislation outlining the duty to accommodate persons with disabilities.
- Participate in reviews and program development initiatives including the Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living (SAIL) Working Group, the Department of Social Services Income Security Redesign Working Group and the Department of Municipal Affairs, Culture and Housing Transit for the Disabled Program Review.

Performance Indicators and Measures

- Development of disability sensitive policies, programs and services by government departments and agencies.
- Incorporation of joint departmental and community collaborative approaches in government planning and decision making process.
- Adoption of intersectoral planning process to address disability issues.
- Improved access to mainstream programs for persons with disabilities.

Risk Assessment

The Office of Disability Issues acknowledges that there is no single, easy one time fix for disability issues and that it will be an ongoing process move the agenda of fairness and inclusion forward. While the Office of Disability Issues influences the development and co-ordination of policies, programs and services across government, it remains the responsibility of government departments and agencies to develop and deliver the services and programs required to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.

Saskatchewan's Action Plan for Children

Objectives

The Action Plan's vision is that all Saskatchewan children will grow in environments that support their well-being and enable them to reach their potential. Its principles are that services for children are:

- preventive
- primary
- culturally appropriate
- supportive
- collaborative
- holistic
- empowering
- community-based

Organization

The Action Plan has no staff or budget. Individual government departments fund initiatives for children (e.g. The Prevention and Support grants managed by Social Services' Family and Youth Division), and staff sit on an interdepartmental steering committee chaired by the Assistant Deputy Minister (Policy) of Social Services.

In 1998-1999, the government of Saskatchewan directed $34.8 million in new funding for childrens' programming under the Action Plan for Children. Most of this funding ($20 million) was for the costs of introducing the Building Independence program in July and August 1998.

Activities

Strengthening Early Childhood Development

- Child care grants of $1 million were announced by Social Services to further enhance early childhood programming and child day care services.
- The child care wage enhancement continued in its third year to increase wages ($500,000) in this area.
- Early Childhood Intervention Program (ECIP) expanded by 20 spaces.

Supporting At-Risk Children and Youth

- Saskatchewan Education provided $4.5 million to assist the school divisions in meeting the needs of students who require additional support.
- Social Services directed $500,000 to Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert to deal with children and youth abused through prostitution.
- The Children's Advocate's office was expanded to provide more public education.
- Saskatchewan Justice dedicated $30,000 to place protection order reports on police databases.
- Saskatchewan Justice developed the SHOCAP program to address chronic and serious young offenders (Serious Habitual Offender Comprehensive Action Program), and allocated $450,000 for its partnership with local police agencies to deal with this segment of the young offender population.

Investing in Communities

- Post Secondary Education and Skills Training provided funding for Family Literacy.
- Economic and Co-operative Development provided funding for Neighborhood Development Organizations (NDO's), which fight child poverty by providing economic development for lower income or at risk neighborhoods.

Addressing Child and Family Poverty

- The Building Independence program was introduced this year: the Saskatchewan Child Benefit, the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement, and the Family Health Benefits.

Plans for 1999-2000

With the Action Plan now approaching its seventh year, the Steering Committee will review and revise the Action Plan's administrative and strategic plan.

It will examine the evaluation of Action Plan initiatives to date, and continue to co-ordinate planning and development of new initiatives relating to children.

International Year of Older Persons

Services

The Minister of Social Services was the Minister Responsible for Seniors in 1998-1999.

To commemorate the International Year of Older Persons, the Minister established a Provincial Advisory Committee.

Objectives

Using the national plan for IYOP as a guide, the Provincial Advisory Committee established four major goals for the year:

- providing leadership to seniors, their organizations and communities by promoting IYOP, identifying opportunities for community-based projects to celebrate the year and providing information on the goals and objectives of IYOP within their communities;
- co-ordinating and serving as a liaison between seniors organizations and the Canada Co-ordinating Committee on potential activities to celebrate IYOP;
- informing the Minister Responsible for Seniors of events and celebrations being planned by organizations and communities to celebrate IYOP; and
- working with the corporate community to raise awareness of IYOP and linking seniors' organizations with potential corporate sponsors for their events and projects.

Organization

An Interdepartmental Co-ordinating Committee on Seniors reports to the Minister; the IYOP Provincial Advisory Committee worked closely with this committee. The Minister appointed Wes Ashwin to be the Saskatchewan representative on the Canada Co-ordinating Committee, and to be chair of the Saskatchewan Advisory Committee on IYOP. The Minister appointed 11 other volunteers to the Advisory Committee.

To help the Advisory Committee develop and implement its plans, the Department seconded a staff position to be the Provincial Co-ordinator on IYOP. The Department established a one-time budget of $110,000 for IYOP, to cover activities, committee costs and the salary of the co-ordinator.

Activities

The Advisory Committee developed a workplan and communications strategy in December 1998, for activities covering the period October 1998 to January 31, 2001.

In the first three months of 1999, the Advisory Committee was involved in the following activities:

- ***January*** — Joined with Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism to tour 20 communities to promote IYOP;
- ***February*** — Assisted Human Resource Development Canada in advising older persons of changes to the Guaranteed Income Supplement application process;
- ***March*** — With Saskatchewan Seniors' Mechanism, granted 51 communities with up to $500 each to assist with their IYOP event planning. The funds were provided by Health Canada.

Plans for 1999-2000

The Advisory Committee presented 10 recommendations on older persons issues to the Minister, one of them being a request that a standing advisory committee be established to provide ongoing advice to the Department and to ensure that the recommendations are implemented.

Three television commercials were produced by CBC Television to promote IYOP, and were run by CBC as Public Service Announcements throughout the year. Several conferences and trade shows were held, to share information and advocate for changes in services to older persons.

For a full report on IYOP's activities and recommendations, please contact the Communications Branch, Saskatchewan Health (306-787-3696).

On September 30, 1999 responsibility for Senior's Issues was transferred to the Associate Minister for Health.

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